



When Something Seems Different

A gentle guide for families noticing changes in memory or thinking.

If someone you care about seems different, it can be hard to know what to say. Use this guide to notice changes, start a kind conversation and prepare to ask for professional advice.

1. What you may notice

Look for changes from their usual abilities, such as:

- You may notice the same question or recent information being forgotten repeatedly.
- You may notice familiar tasks or everyday planning becoming harder.
- You may notice difficulty following conversations or finding familiar places.
- You may notice changes in judgment, mood or participation.

These are examples, not a complete list. You can ask a clinician about any change that concerns you.

2. Start a caring conversation

Choose a quiet, private moment. Describe one observation, ask how they feel and listen. Avoid quizzes, public corrections or a family confrontation.

"I care about you. I noticed something seemed harder than usual. How has it felt for you?"

Ask before sharing details. It may take more than one conversation; ongoing concerns still deserve professional advice.

3. Choose a next step together

Arrange a health care appointment for concerning changes. Different conditions can contribute; a clinician can help work out the cause. Offer a ride or company if wanted. Bring examples of what changed, when and its everyday impact. Do not delay care to complete notes.

Agreed next step / who will help / when:

 **Sudden confusion: get help immediately.** Do not wait for a routine appointment. In the U.S., call 911 for sudden confusion or stroke signs such as new speech difficulty, facial droop or one-sided weakness. Elsewhere, call your local emergency number.