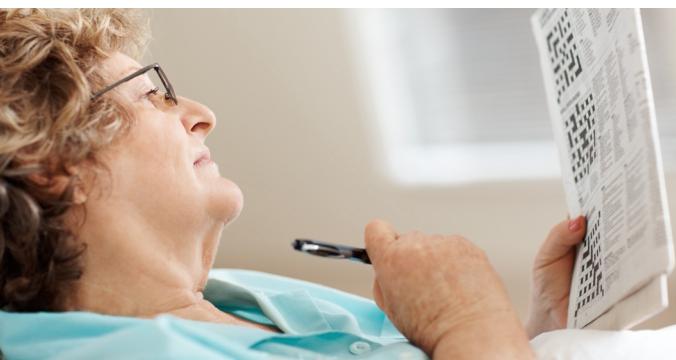


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→ Your Health

Is Your Forgetfulness Cause for Concern?



Julie Schneider
MD, MS
Neurologist

Just because you sometimes forget your neighbor's name doesn't mean you're developing dementia — a loss of brain function that affects memory, thinking and behavior — but there are signs and risk factors that may point to more serious problems.

Julie Schneider, MD, MS, a neurologist and neuropathologist at the Rush Alzheimer's Disease Center, says that while it might seem like forgetfulness comes with growing older, it's not a given.

"We have conducted studies at Rush where we use annual cognitive testing to track memory and other cognitive functions in people from ages 65 to over 100, and some of them don't have any memory loss with age," she says. "So you can certainly age without having any significant memory loss."

When to be concerned

On occasion, we all forget things. When forgetfulness becomes more persistent and severe, affects everyday function and causes people close to you to take notice, it may signal a problem.

"For instance, you may frequently forget what people tell you, forget recent events or get lost in familiar locations," Schneider explains. "In addition, a problem may become evident when your family or friends note that you repeat yourself or have other memory problems."

If you have a parent or sibling who has Alzheimer's, your risk for the disease goes up, so that's a reason to be especially mindful of any memory changes.

Potential causes of memory loss

- **Some medications** can lead to memory issues, including pain medicines and drugs used to treat conditions like anxiety or urinary incontinence. If you stop taking the drug that's causing the problem, your memory will likely improve.
- **Medical and psychological issues** — including depression as well as deficiencies of thyroid hormone and vitamin B12 — can cause memory issues that may be reversible once the underlying condition is treated.
- **Stroke or a transient ischemic attack** can cause memory loss, but rehabilitation may help you recover some of your previous functioning.
- **Neurodegenerative diseases**, such as Alzheimer's disease, cause progressive memory loss that can't be reversed.

Lowering your risk of dementia

Research at Rush and other centers worldwide has shown that the following behaviors may help protect or delay against dementia and Alzheimer's:

- Being more involved in cognitive activities (e.g., reading and playing games)
- Having a larger social network
- Exercising regularly
- Eating a diet low in saturated fats and rich in vitamin E and healthy fats like omega-3
- Having a higher purpose in life and deriving meaning from life's experiences
- Expanding your "life space," or the environment in which you live, which includes your home, neighborhood, community and beyond

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Join us on Wednesday, July 20, for a discussion of neurological issues and aging. See the calendar insert for details.

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The Language of Depression: 6 Nonverbal Signs to Watch for



Tucker Eads, MA, LCSW
Psychotherapist

Stigma around mental health issues is dropping steadily in the United States, according to recent surveys — but for some older adults, talking about feelings of depression is still difficult, says **Tucker Eads, MA, LCSW**, a Rush psychotherapist. If you're a friend, family member or caregiver, keeping an eye out for the following signs of potential depression is important.

1. Lack of interest in formerly enjoyable activities. This is one of the symptoms most likely to show up in older adults, Eads says. "Someone might not say, 'I'm feeling down,' but it's really noticeable when they're not engaging with hobbies and interests that they used to enjoy."

2. Not following through with routines or responsibilities. "If the kitchen was always neat and now dishes are piling up, or if someone is suddenly wearing the same outfit all the time, that may be a sign."

3. Changes in appetite or sleep habits. Eating less, sleeping more or having trouble sleeping are all possible indicators of depression.

4. Complaints about physical discomfort. "Depression often shows up in the body," Eads says. "Existing problems can feel more painful, or new ones can arise. This can be tricky to evaluate, but be on the lookout for it."

5. Memory problems. "Depression shows up in our thinking and can present as difficulty with memory," Eads says. "For a lot of people, 'brain fog' was magnified by the pandemic causing days to bleed together a bit, but if you're seeing sudden changes in thinking, it could be an issue."

6. Talking less. "Depression makes us feel less social, and we tend to pull away from relationships. If someone was relatively talkative and becomes withdrawn, or if you used to hear from them frequently and aren't anymore, that can be a sign."

How you can help

If you see signs of depression that last for more than a couple of weeks, Eads offers a few ways to be helpful.

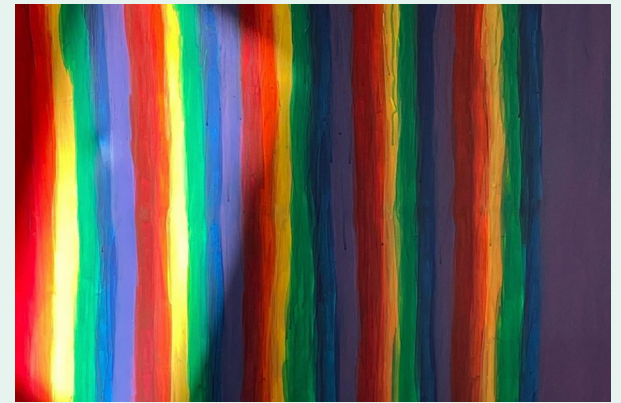
Encouraging the person to be physically and socially active can help alleviate (or protect against) depression. "The more social connections you have, and the more engaged in activities you are, the less likely you are to experience depression," he says.

The best way to help is to have open lines of communication. "The more open the dialogue you have, the more likely it will be that they'll be receptive if you ask about depression," he explains. And being direct is important: "People can tell if you're beating around the bush, so be open and curious, not accusatory.

"Try something like, 'I've noticed that you're not seeing the people you used to enjoy getting together with. Have you noticed that, too?'"

If they agree, ask whether they'd be willing to talk to their primary care physician about it; then, if you're involved in their medical care, you can request a depression screening in an email or MyChart note to the provider.

Join us on Wednesday, Sept. 7, for a discussion of depression and mental health. See the calendar insert for details.



Sharing What Matters Through Art

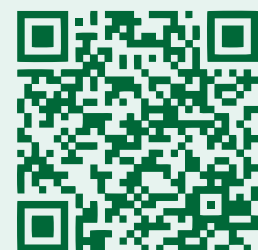
Schaalman Senior Voices aims to engage with the community to have conversations about aging, life and what matters.

Recently, the program co-hosted an event with Esperanza Community Services. "Sharing What Matters Through Art" brought together a group of older adults for art expression and video interviews to share what's most important to them.

Participants discussed their artwork and why it's important to them; they also shared what they wish others could know about them, talked about some of their favorite things to do and discussed what healthy aging means.

- Watch videos from the event at aging.rush.edu/Schaalman/What-Matters-Community.
- Learn more about Esperanza Community Services at esperanzacommunity.org.
- To see more videos of people sharing what matters most as they age, visit aging.rush.edu/Schaalman.

Are you interested in recording your own video to share what matters most to you as you age? Visit bit.ly/RecordMyStory or point your smartphone camera at the code below.



Preventing Oral Cancer



Samer Al-Khudari, MD
Head and neck surgeon

When it comes to oral health, most of us are focused on avoiding cavities or banishing bad breath. We don't really think about taking steps to prevent oral cancers.

But according to **Samer Al-Khudari, MD**, we should. "Unfortunately, there is relatively low awareness about these cancers — including how to prevent and recognize them," says Al-Khudari, a head and neck surgeon at Rush University Medical Center.

Cancers of the oral cavity (including the lips, cheeks and tongue) and the oropharynx (including the soft palate, tonsils and throat) can crop up in a variety of ways and are not always easy to spot. "Symptoms vary by the type of cancer," Al-Khudari explains. "Not all patients have pain or irritation. Sometimes the symptoms are barely noticeable in the early stages."

That's a big reason why these cancers often go undiagnosed until the later stages, after they have spread to the lymph nodes. The good news is that even at the later stages, these cancers are still very treatable.

With current treatment advances, survival rates for oral cancers have improved over even a decade ago. In fact, some have been found to have survival rates of 80% to 90% at three years. And many oral cavity and oropharyngeal cancers can be prevented altogether with sensible self-care and healthy lifestyle choices.

Al-Khudari offers some preventive tips:

1. Steer clear of tobacco.

The longer you've used tobacco and the more often you use it, the greater your risk of head and neck cancers. "Both smoking and smokeless tobacco play a direct role in causing these cancers," Al-Khudari says.

2. Drink alcohol only in moderation.

As with smoking, the longer you use alcohol and the more you drink, the more your risk goes up. That's because alcohol plays a role in changing the body's chemistry to break down its defenses against cancer.

People who have more than three and a half alcoholic drinks per day double or triple their risk of oral cavity cancers, according to the National Institutes of Health.

3. See your dentist regularly.

Dentists and dental hygienists are often the first to notice potentially cancerous growths. "Typically, they catch things really early during routine dental exams," Al-Khudari says. In addition to visiting the dentist every six months, be sure to brush and floss twice a day — and after meals — to keep your teeth and mouth healthy.

4. Shield your lips from the sun.

"If you have a history of severe sunburns, take extra care with your lips. Just as skin can burn easily, the lips are also sensitive to the sun," Al-Khudari says. In addition to limiting sun exposure during the peak hours of 10 a.m. to 2 p.m., always wear a protective lip balm with SPF when you're outside; reapply it after you eat or drink, or whenever you reapply sunscreen. Also, wear hats that shield your face from the sun.



Symptoms of oral cancer

Warning signs of mouth and throat cancers include the following:

- Sores in the mouth that don't heal
- Bleeding in the mouth that lasts more than a week
- Slow-growing lumps in the mouth or neck
- Pain in your mouth lasting more than two weeks
- Dramatic voice changes, especially in smokers
- Persistent earaches in both ears
- Numbness of the lower lip and chin

If you experience any of these symptoms, Al-Khudari suggests visiting your primary care doctor as soon as possible. "If it is cancer, the earlier it's diagnosed, the better the chance we can successfully treat it."

Join us on Wednesday, July 6, for a discussion about dental health. See the calendar insert for details.

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PLEASE NOTE: All physicians featured in this publication are on the medical staff of Rush. Some of the physicians are in private practice and, as independent practitioners, are not employees or agents of Rush.
Rush is an academic health system comprising Rush University Medical Center, Rush Copley Medical Center and Rush Oak Park Hospital.

4 Ways to Lower Your Skin Cancer Risk

While skin cancer is the most common type of cancer, most cases can be prevented or can be treated when caught early. That's why protection and awareness are crucial to keeping your skin healthy.

- 1. Schedule outdoor activities before 10 a.m. or after 4 p.m. to avoid peak UV radiation.** And pick a shady spot — or create your own with an umbrella.
- 2. Put on a wide-brimmed hat and sun-protective clothing,** including long sleeves and pants or skirts. Don't forget sunglasses to help prevent eyelid skin cancers.

- 3. Choose a sunscreen with SPF 30 or above.** Look for the words "broad spectrum" or the ingredients "zinc oxide" and "titanium dioxide." Remember to coat your ears, tops of your feet and scalp — all common areas for skin cancer.
- 4. Get regular skin exams.** An exam by a board-certified dermatologist can help you understand your risk level and evaluate any potentially worrisome spots. Skin cancers occur most often in light-skinned people, but those with darker skin can also develop them — particularly where skin has little or no pigmentation, including the palms of the hands and bottoms of the feet.

Join us on Wednesday, Aug. 24, for a discussion of skin health. See the calendar insert for details.

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Summer 2022 Free Health and Aging Events

The following lectures will be held virtually.
You can view them online or listen to them via phone.

For updates on Rush Generations programs, sign up
for our emails at bit.ly/RushGenerations.



To join these lectures online,

visit the Rush Generations
YouTube page at the time
of the event:

cutt.ly/RushGenYouTube.



To dial in via phone (audio only):

Call **(312) 626-6799** at the
time of the event and enter
meeting ID 688 127 6741#.

July

Dental Health

Wednesday, July 6, 1 to 2:30 p.m.

Good dental health habits become more essential as we age. Join us for a lecture as we discuss ways to achieve good oral and dental health, and how to access dental care as an older adult.

Neurological Issues in Aging

Wednesday, July 20, 1 to 2:30 p.m.

Hear from experts in the field of neurology about common changes associated with aging and some of the newest innovations in treatment for Parkinson's disease and epilepsy. You'll learn about important resources for older adults and caregivers.

August

Advance Directives

Wednesday, Aug. 3, 1 to 2:30 p.m.

This lecture will discuss the importance of preparing advance directives and discuss advance care planning, as well as strategies for having difficult discussions. You'll learn the differences between documents like power of attorney for health care, advance directive, DNR, POLST and others.

Skin Health

Wednesday, Aug. 24, 1 to 2 p.m.

Did you know that your skin is your body's largest organ? Join us to learn the best strategies for keeping skin healthy as you age and hear about treatments for conditions like alopecia, eczema and psoriasis.

September

Depression and Mental Health

Wednesday, Sept. 7, 1 to 2:30 p.m.

The COVID-19 pandemic has meant that more than ever, older adults and caregivers are vulnerable to the mental health repercussions of social isolation, grief and loss. Join us for a panel to discuss signs of depression and resources that can help.

Fall Prevention

Wednesday, Sept. 21, 1 to 2:30 p.m.

Falls are the No. 1 reason for emergency room visits and hospitalizations by older adults. This Falls Prevention Awareness Month lecture will provide information to help you improve your balance and stay safe.

Classes and Workshops

These classes and workshops (except Walk With Ease) will be held virtually. Some in-person workshops may be available on the West Side of Chicago. To inquire, please call Padraic Stanley at **(312) 942-2089**.

To participate in virtual sessions, you'll need access to the Zoom app through a computer, tablet or smartphone with a webcam. To reserve your place and receive a Zoom link to your event, please call **(800) 757-0202** and be ready to provide a valid phone number and email address. If you don't have Zoom access but are interested in self-guided workshops with a weekly phone check-in, please call Padraic Stanley at **(312) 942-2089**.

Classes

Gentle Chair Yoga

Thursdays, Aug. 4 to Sept. 22
11 a.m. to noon
\$40 for the eight-class session

Mindfulness 101

Fridays, Aug. 5 to Aug. 26
10:30 a.m. to noon
\$20 for the four-class session

Zumba Gold

Mondays, Aug. 8 to Oct. 3
(no class on Sept. 5)
1 to 2 p.m.
\$40 for the eight-class session

Gentle Chair Yoga

Thursdays, Sept. 29 to Nov. 17
11 a.m. to noon
\$40 for the eight-class session

Workshops

Aprendiendo a Vivir Mejor con el Dolor Crónico

Todos los jueves, 14 de julio hasta el 25 de agosto
1 p.m. a 3:30 p.m.

Walk With Ease (meets in person)

Wednesdays, Thursdays and Fridays, July 20 through Sept. 2
Garfield Park Conservatory
2 to 3:30 p.m.

Take Charge of Your Health

Thursdays, July 28 through Sept. 8
10 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.

A Matter of Balance

Wednesdays and Fridays, Aug. 3 through Aug. 31
10 a.m. to noon

Learning To Live Well With Chronic Pain

Thursdays, Sept. 1 through Oct. 13
1 to 3:30 p.m.

Tai Chi for Arthritis and Fall Prevention

Mondays and Wednesdays, Sept. 7 to Nov. 2
11 a.m. to noon

Both Rush University Medical Center and Rush Oak Park Hospital comply with applicable federal civil rights laws and do not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, age, disability or sex.

Español (Spanish)

ATENCIÓN: si habla español, tiene a su disposición servicios gratuitos de asistencia lingüística. Llame al 1-312-563-2987 (TTY: 1-312-563-2987).

Polski (Polish)

UWAGA: jeżeli mówisz po polsku, możesz skorzystać z bezpłatnej pomocy językowej. Zadzwoń pod numer 1-312-563-2987 (TTY: 1-312-563-2987).

繁體中文 (Chinese)

注意: 如果您使用繁體中文, 您可以免費獲得語言援助服務。請致電 1-312-563-2987 (TTY: 1-312-563-2987)

한국어 (Korean)

주의: 한국어를 사용하시는 경우, 언어 지원 서비스를 무료로 이용하실 수 있습니다. 1-312-563-2987 (TTY: 1-312-563-2987) 번으로 전화해 주십시오.

Tagalog

PAUNAWA: Kung nagsasalita ka ng Tagalog, maaari kang gumamit ng mga serbisyo ng tulong sa wika nang walang bayad. Tumawag sa 1-312-563-2987 (TTY: 1-312-563-2987).

العربية (Arabic)

ملاحظة: إذا كنت تتحدث اللغة العربية، فإن خدمات المساعدة اللغوية متاحة لك مجاناً. اتصل بالرقم 1-312-563-2987 (TTY: 1-312-563-2987).

Русский (Russian)

ВНИМАНИЕ: Если вы говорите на русском языке, то вам доступны бесплатные услуги перевода. Звоните по телефону 1-312-563-2987 (телетайп: 1-312-563-2987).

ગુજરાતી (Gujarati)

સૂચના: જો તમે ગુજરાતી બોલતા હો, તો નિ:શુલ્ક ભાષા સહાય સેવાઓ તમારા માટે ઉપલબ્ધ છે. ફોન કરો 1-312-563-2987 (TTY: 1-312-563-2987).

اُردُو (Urdu)

خبردار: اگر آپ اردو بولتے ہیں، تو آپ کو زبان کی مدد کی خدمات مفت میں دستیاب ہیں۔ کال کریں 1-312-563-2987 (TTY: 1-312-563-2987)۔

Tiếng Việt (Vietnamese)

CHÚ Ý: Nếu bạn nói Tiếng Việt, có các dịch vụ hỗ trợ ngôn ngữ miễn phí dành cho bạn. Gọi số 1-312-563-2987 (TTY: 1-312-563-2987).

Italiano (Italian)

ATTENZIONE: In caso la lingua parlata sia l'italiano, sono disponibili servizi di assistenza linguistica gratuiti. Chiamare il numero 1-312-563-2987 (TTY: 1-312-563-2987).

हिंदी (Hindi)

ध्यान दें: यदि आप हिंदी बोलते हैं तो आपके लिए मुफ्त में भाषा सहायता सेवाएं उपलब्ध हैं। 1-312-563-2987 (TTY: 1-312-563-2987) पर कॉल करें।

Français (French)

ATTENTION: Si vous parlez français, des services d'aide linguistique vous sont proposés gratuitement. Appelez le 1-312-563-2987 (ATS: 1-312-563-2987).

λληνικά (Greek)

ΠΡΟΣΟΧΗ: Αν μιλάτε ελληνικά, στη διάθεσή σας βρίσκονται υπηρεσίες γλωσσικής υποστήριξης, οι οποίες παρέχονται δωρεάν. Καλέστε 1-312-563-2987 (TTY: 1-312-563-2987).

Deutsch (German)

ACHTUNG: Wenn Sie Deutsch sprechen, stehen Ihnen kostenlos sprachliche Hilfsdienstleistungen zur Verfügung. Rufnummer: 1-312-563-2987 (TTY: 1-312-563-2987).