



See the signs.
Start a conversation
about Alzheimer's.



Did you know one in nine Americans age 65 and older has Alzheimer's disease?¹ Increasing age is the greatest known risk factor.¹ The Alzheimer's Disease Program at the Texas Department of State Health Services works to increase awareness of the disease and provide helpful information to individuals, families, friends and caregivers.

Are you worried that changes in a loved one's memory or how they act might be Alzheimer's disease? Talking about your concerns is the first step to helping them. It can be a difficult conversation, but the sooner you have it, the better. Early treatment can make a big difference in quality of life. The tips below can help begin the conversation.^{2,3}

- **Start the conversation** if you notice signs of memory loss or difficulty doing usual activities.
- **Choose a time** to have the conversation when you and your loved one aren't busy or tired.
- **Pick a place** that is familiar, comfortable and quiet.
- **Have confidence** you're doing the right thing.
- **Decide in advance** what you're going to say.
- **Keep your words simple**, gentle and reassuring.
- **Begin by** asking if they've noticed any differences in their behavior.
- **Say you're concerned** and give a few examples why.
- **Listen when they express worry** about memory loss or difficulty doing usual activities.
- **Reassure them** that Alzheimer's is a disease and not something they are doing wrong, even though it may feel embarrassing to talk about it.
- **Encourage them to see a doctor** to find out what's causing memory loss. Offer to go with them for support.
- **Learn about local resources** that can help you understand memory loss and learn ways to talk with your loved one and their doctor.

Find out more about Alzheimer's disease, ways to start a conversation and available community resources at dshs.texas.gov/alzheimers.



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¹ Alzheimer's Association. Alzheimer's disease facts and figures. <https://www.alz.org/media/Documents/alzheimers-facts-and-figures.pdf>. 2021. Accessed January 18, 2022.

² The Conversation Project. The Conversation Project Conversation Starter Kit. <https://theconversationproject.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/02/ConversationProject-ConvoStarterKit-English.pdf>. 2020. Accessed June 30, 2020.

³ Alzheimer's WA. How to talk to a loved one about dementia. <https://www.alzheimerswa.org.au/the-hardest-conversation-how-to-talk-to-a-loved-one-about-dementia/>. Date unknown. Accessed June 30, 2020.