



THE ALZHEIMER
SOCIETY of IRELAND



Practical Tips...
**for Coping with
Memory Loss**





Practical tips

If you find it difficult to remember things there are many ways you can help yourself. Different things will help different people. Here are some examples, choose the ones that suit you.

Everyday life

Routine

Use routines and daily habits so that you have a structure to your day. This will help you remember what you need to do.

One thing at a time

Do things at your own pace and try to do one thing at a time.

Keep things in the same place

Put things you use regularly in the same place where they are easy to see. This will help you to keep track of things like your:

👁 keys

👁 glasses

👁 wallet

👁 diary.

Phone numbers

Keep important phone numbers and a notepad and pen by the phone so that you can find them quickly and easily when you need them.

Pay bills automatically

Arrange with your bank to pay regular bills by direct debit or standing order so they are paid automatically.

Put paperwork in a safe place

Put important legal and financial paperwork in a safe place and tell someone you trust where they are.

Think about talking to your solicitor

Think about if you need to speak to your solicitor to put your affairs in order.

Use pill boxes

If you are taking medication, ask your pharmacist about pillboxes. These can help you keep track of your different medicines.



Memory aids

There are many things you can use to support or prompt your memory so you don't feel you have to remember everything all the time.

Use lists

Make lists or keep a diary to help you keep track of the things you need to do, or have already done. Keep the lists in a place that is easy to see or that you check every day – so that it becomes part of your daily routine.

Wall board or calendar can be helpful

Many people find a wipe-clean board, blackboard or wall calendar in their kitchen helpful. You and your family can write down important things about any particular day, and you can then check this easily.

Times and dates

To help you keep track of times and dates use a:

- 🕒 clock

- 🕒 watch

- 🕒 calendar.

You can buy clocks with large faces; and watches that you can set to remind you of things.



Ask for help

If you want help or feel things are getting more difficult, talk to your loved ones or your doctor or call the **Alzheimer National Helpline 1800 341 341**

To-do notes

Use sticky-backed notes to help remind you:

- 🕒 what you have to do; or
- 🕒 how to do something.

Put the notes near where you need them for, example:

- 🕒 near an appliance; or
- 🕒 on a remote control.



Technology

Use technology if you are comfortable with it. Your mobile phone can be set to beep to remind you at specific times. **Assist Ireland** provide a directory of products that can help, visit www.assistireland.ie for more information.

Timers

Use a timer to help you know when it is time to take something out of the oven or off the stove.

Before going out and going to bed

Keep a list of important things to do before you go out and before you go to bed like:

- 🕒 making sure the cooker is turned off; and
- 🕒 the front door is locked.



Talk to people

Everyone needs help from time to time. It often makes life easier to tell people your memory isn't very good. Then you can ask for help or ask questions and continue to get on with life.

Practise people's names

When meeting someone new, try to use their name several times during the conversation to help you remember it. If you forget, just ask.

Friends and family

Talk to family and friends about ways they can help and support you. For example, they might:

- 👁 call to remind you about an appointment; or
- 👁 help you to plan out a diary or calendar.

Give yourself time

It can take time to set up routines and to get used to using memory aids. Try not to get too frustrated, give yourself time.

Steps to keeping well

No matter what is the cause of your memory problems, it always helps to keep as well as possible. Talk to your doctor about the suggestions below.

Eat healthily

Eat a balanced diet, with lots of fruit and vegetables. Limit the amount of food you eat that contains a lot of:

- fat
- salt
- sugar.

Exercise regularly

It doesn't have to be strenuous, good choices include:

- walking
- dancing
- gardening.

Stay active

Keep active with your hobbies and interests. Stay in touch with:

- family
- friends
- your local community.

Get health checks

Have your blood pressure and cholesterol checked.

Don't smoke

You will always benefit from giving up smoking.

Moderate drinking

Drink alcohol in moderation.

Wind down

Get plenty of sleep, rest and relaxation.



What if I have dementia?

Hearing the words dementia or Alzheimer's disease can come as a great shock, even when expected. You could experience a range of emotions and reactions. You may feel shocked, frightened, angry, frustrated, worried and sad. You may also feel relieved to know the reason for the changes you have been experiencing and want to start to plan.

A diagnosis means you can:

- 👁 access appropriate treatments, services and supports;
- 👁 plan your legal and financial affairs; and
- 👁 make decisions about your future care.



With the right support many people with dementia lead active and fulfilling lives. You can read about the experiences of people with dementia in our booklet

I have dementia...first steps after diagnosis.

To find out more about dementia and what supports are available in your area talk to your doctor or contact the **Alzheimer National Helpline at 1800 341 341.**

If you are worried about changes in your memory or are finding things difficult, there is something you can do:



Visit your GP



Call 1800 341 341



Log on to www.alzheimer.ie



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