



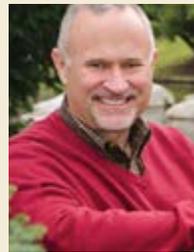
# When to consider **memory care.**

While a certain amount of forgetfulness is normal as we get older, significant confusion or profound forgetfulness could be a symptom of something more serious.

If you notice changes in a family member's behavior or appearance, or uncharacteristic lapses in memory that go beyond mere *senior moments*, it's important to discuss it with their doctor. By knowing how to recognize early signs of dementia, you can help your family member get the care and support they need sooner.

**Continue reading to learn about common warning signs of Alzheimer's and other forms of dementia, along with recommendations on what to do next from Alzheimer's expert David Troxel. Atria works in partnership with Troxel to provide forward-thinking care for people living with dementia.**

## About **David Troxel**



David Troxel is a renowned Alzheimer's expert and co-author of *A Dignified Life: The Best Friends Approach to Alzheimer's Care*. He has served as Executive Board member of the American Public Health Association and as an Ethics Advisory Panel member for the Alzheimer's Association®.

# Early warning signs of dementia

- ▶ Short-term forgetfulness, such as forgetting family members' names or what day it is
- ▶ Noticeable changes in personality
- ▶ Changes in normal routines and behaviors, including:
  - ▶ Wearing the same clothes every day, or clothes that don't match
  - ▶ Not paying bills on time, or at all
  - ▶ Spending more time alone at home; not getting out as much
  - ▶ Paying less attention to personal hygiene; not bathing as often
  - ▶ Unusual clutter or mess in the home

## What to do, according to David Troxel

### *“See their doctor or a specialist”*

A primary care physician can refer you to a specialist who will determine if your family member's behavior could be related to dementia. If the specialist confirms a dementia diagnosis, know that – with proper guidance and supervision – your family member can get their life back and be social, creative and active again.



# Advanced warning signs of dementia

- ▶ An increase in any of the early signs
- ▶ Misplacing valued items, such as a pocketbook or jewelry
- ▶ Increased depression due to difficulty socializing with friends or doing things they once enjoyed
- ▶ Difficulty finding the right words at times
- ▶ Asking the same questions repeatedly
- ▶ A decline in personal hygiene
- ▶ Trouble navigating menus during meals
- ▶ Struggling to follow ordered steps for a given task



SENIOR LIVING

## What to do, according to David Troxel

***“Transition your family member to an environment rich in socialization to enhance safety and improve quality of life.”***

As dementia progresses, your family member may struggle in their current environment. By moving him or her to a smaller, more structured setting with personalized care and social interaction, Atria can help your family member regain a sense of control and accomplishment, while ensuring their safety.

Caregivers in Atria’s Life Guidance® memory care neighborhoods are extensively trained in specialized dementia care methods. They learn each resident’s life story to build friendship and offer encouragement. When help is needed with personal care or other concerns, staff gently step in and offer discreet assistance.

Atria offers support groups, education and partnership for families. You can continue to be involved in your family member’s life and visit as often as you like, while Atria handles the difficult things to help make your family’s life better.

***“Families should obtain the appropriate legal authority to act on their parent or spouse’s behalf.”***

- ▶ A trust that allows a responsible party to manage a person’s assets
- ▶ A durable power of attorney for making financial decisions
- ▶ A separate power of attorney for dealing with healthcare decisions
- ▶ An advanced healthcare directive allowing someone to specify or communicate the individual’s wishes for treatment on their behalf

## Some risks of waiting too long:

- ▶ Poor hygiene may lead to infections
- ▶ Wandering from home can endanger their safety
- ▶ Not being able to recognize friends and family can deepen feelings of depression
- ▶ Significant changes in diet may lead to malnutrition or dehydration
- ▶ Impaired decision-making ability can increase vulnerability to abuse and identity theft
- ▶ Resistance to taking medications can lead to greater health problems