



COGNITIVA Caregiver Quick Guide & Symptom Log

For families and loved ones supporting someone with possible memory or cognitive changes.

A. Normal Aging vs. Concerning Change

Normal aging may include:

- Occasionally misplacing items but finding them later.
- Sometimes searching for a word but eventually remembering it.
- Needing more time to learn a new phone, app, or device.

Concerning changes can include:

- Repeating the same questions, stories, or comments over and over.
- Getting lost in familiar places (for example, at a nearby store or when driving home).
- Difficulty managing finances, bills, medications, or appointments.
- Noticeable changes in judgment (falling for scams, risky decisions, giving away money).
- Increasing apathy (loss of interest in hobbies or social activities).
- New changes in personality, mood, or behavior that are out of character.
- Trouble following conversations, recipes, or instructions that used to be easy.

If you are noticing several of these changes, it is important to discuss them with a healthcare professional. Early evaluation can help identify reversible causes and allow time to plan support.

B. How to Talk to Your Loved One About Your Concerns

You might say:

- “I’ve noticed a few changes in your memory and I care about your health. Could we talk to the doctor together to check things out?”
- “I know it may feel scary, but sometimes there are treatable reasons for memory changes. I’d feel better if we got more information.”
- “Would you be open to having a ‘brain health check-up’? I can go with you.”

Tips:

- Choose a calm, private time to talk.
- Focus on your concern and support, not criticism or blame.
- Avoid arguing about specific events; instead, talk about your overall pattern of concern.
- Offer to help schedule and attend the appointment.

C. What to Bring to a Brain Health or Memory Evaluation

It can help the clinician if you bring:

- A list of specific changes you’ve noticed and when they started.
- Current medications and supplements, including over-the-counter products.
- Recent medical history, hospitalizations, sleep issues, mood changes, falls, or head injuries.



- Information about family history of dementia, stroke, or serious psychiatric illness.
- Any completed screening tools (for example, AD8 or other checklists).

D. How You Can Support Brain Health as a Caregiver

While you cannot control everything, you can support daily habits that may help brain health:

- Encourage regular routines for meals, medication, and sleep.
- Promote safe movement (walks, gentle exercises) as approved by the doctor.
- Help with hearing or vision aids (glasses, hearing aids, batteries, cleaning).
- Support brain-stimulating activities (music, conversation, simple games, reminiscence).
- Maintain social contact and meaningful activities as much as possible.
- Take care of your own health and rest—caregiver burnout is very common.

You are not alone. Asking for help and building a support team around you and your loved one is a sign of strength, not failure.



Symptom Log

Use this page to jot down changes you notice so you can share specific examples with a clinician.

Date	What I noticed	Context / example	Questions or safety concerns

Helpful things to note: new repetition, confusion, getting lost, medication problems, mood or behavior changes, falls, sleep changes, or times when symptoms seem better or worse.



Symptom Log (continued)

Additional space for caregiver notes.

Date	What I noticed	Context / example	Questions or safety concerns