



# wellness & safety

Schools Insurance Authority



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## Forgetfulness vs. memory loss

# The key indicators of Alzheimer's are frequency, degree and disruption

Everyone experiences lapses in memory from time to time and most forgetfulness is regarded as more annoying than alarming - often the result of "circuit overload" from busy schedules and endless obligations. The key indicators of potentially bigger problems, such as Alzheimer's or other dementia, on the other hand, are the high degree and frequency of memory loss. Over time, the memory decline and impaired thinking/reasoning associated with the disease escalate to the point of disrupting daily life.

Here are 10 warning signs and symptoms of Alzheimer's and other types of dementia. If you have concerns, see a doctor for further discussion:

- **Memory loss that disrupts daily routines and relationships.** Forgetting recently learned information, important dates or events; asking for the same information over and over.
- **Challenges in planning or solving problems.** Confusion about following a familiar recipe or keeping track of monthly bills.
- **Difficulty completing familiar tasks at home, at work or at leisure.** Trouble driving to a familiar location, managing a budget at work or remembering the rules of a favorite game.
- **Confusion with time or place.** Unable to keep track of dates, seasons and the passage of time. Not knowing or forgetting one's physical location.
- **Trouble understanding visual images and spatial relationships.** Vision problems, such as difficulty reading, judging distance and determining color or contrast.
- **New problems with words in speaking or writing.** Stopping in the middle of a conversation with no idea how to continue; constant repetition.
- **Misplacing things and losing the ability to retrace steps.** Putting things in unusual places; unable to retrace



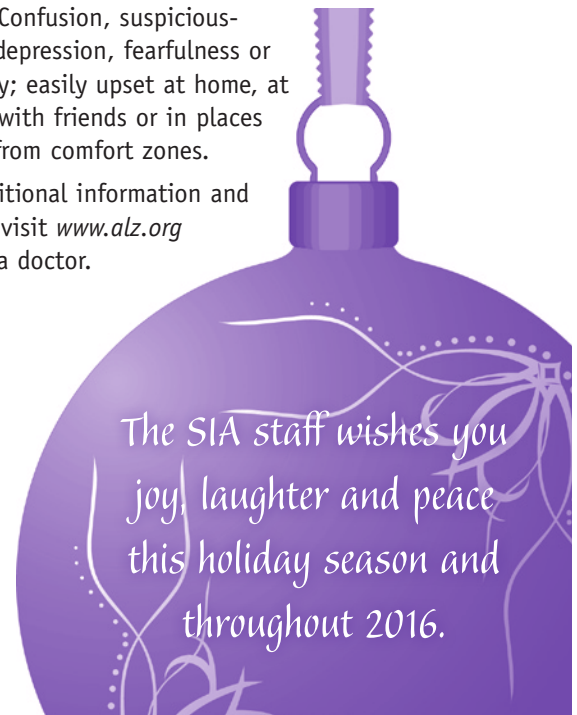
November is Alzheimer's  
Awareness Month

steps to find a "lost" item again; accusing others of stealing.

- **Decreased or poor judgment.** Giving large amounts of money to telemarketers or paying less attention to grooming and personal cleanliness.
- **Withdrawal from work or social activities.** Trouble keeping up with a favorite sports team or remembering how to participate in a favorite hobby; avoiding social situations because of life-altering changes taking place.

- **Changes in mood and personality.** Confusion, suspiciousness, depression, fearfulness or anxiety; easily upset at home, at work, with friends or in places away from comfort zones.

For additional information and resources, visit [www.alz.org](http://www.alz.org) or talk to a doctor.





- The winter season can be hazardous
- Spend more quality time with family

## The wet, windy and icy season can be hazardous to your health

The wet, windy and icy season is practically here, so now's the time to become extra-aware of physical surroundings and navigate them with care. Do the following to help keep slip and trip accidents at bay:

- **Stay focused on your route of travel and pay attention to your surroundings.**
- **Take your time.** Walk carefully and slowly.
- **Use railings when climbing up or down stairs and ramps.**
- **Wear non-slip, well-fitting flat-heel shoes.**
- **Be cautious when walking through wet leaves, which can be slippery.** Ask that they regularly be removed from walkways.
- **Keep your hands at your sides, not in your pockets.**
- **Make sure walkway/driveway lighting is adequate.** Report any non-working lights.
- **Barricade or otherwise signal areas that may be flooded, icy or difficult to traverse.**
- **Utilize carts, hand trucks, dollies or other devices that enable easy movement and clear views.**



## Quality family time includes talking, listening and problem-solving together

Open communication plays a significant role in building and nurturing families, and helps cultivate love, trust and respect. More importantly, it helps families cope with life's ups and downs. Initiating and preserving quality family time can be enhanced by the following:

- **Listening.** Take a moment to stop what you're doing and really listen, not just hear. Try to understand the feelings others convey.
- **Thinking first and choosing words carefully.** If you're angry, upset or need to convey emotions that may start conflict, be sure to use "I" phrases. Give those listening chances to respond and request that they use the "I" statements as well.
- **Taking an interest.** Giving undivided attention to a loved one, even for a short period of time, is better than spending longer times together while distracted and not fully present.
- **Looking after your tone.** It's been said that one should "tame the tongue" to avoid saying hurtful or sinister words. Kind words are more heartfelt and can be uplifting.
- **Being trustworthy and maintaining confidence.** Trust will always be an essential ingredient in relationships, and that includes family ones. Keep promises.
- **Discussing important issues and problems as a group.** Issues must be discussed in ways that benefit the family. Don't use the discussion to blame, but rather to exchange views and problem-solve.
- **Always finding time for family.** Have fun together. Lighthearted moments can help family members enjoy each other's company, which can then pave the way to better communication.



## How to make the most out of winter workouts

Cold winter weather can sometimes make working out seem less than desirable. Even heating up the car in the wee hours of the morning to get to the gym for a favorite Spinning class can be tough. Although on most days staying snuggled up in a warm bed seems far more appealing, winter shouldn't be a time to let fitness plans hibernate. So, get creative about winter fitness by trying new and fun strategies:

1. **Change your mindset.** Winter isn't just about cold weather, it's a whole new season! Embrace this time of year by sitting down to revisit your goals and plan out what you'd like to accomplish during the next few months. It can help you see winter in a new, more inspired way.
2. **Go out and play!** If you can't seem to muster the energy to routinely work out during this time of year, try "playing" instead. Hula-hoop with your kids or dance to your favorite songs. The best part of playing is that it doesn't feel like working out—though you can still get your heart rate up and have an excellent cardio session.
3. **Get creative at home.** Sure, getting to the gym can be more of a hassle when it's cold outside, but never use wet, cold or snowy weather as an excuse to miss your daily exercise. Instead, work out at home, where it's cozy and warm. Whether you pop in a new workout DVD, or even just use your body weight for a killer workout, exercising at home can be convenient and fun.
4. **Try something new.** There's nothing like signing up for a new class or joining an indoor sports league to get you up and moving during chilly months. Whether it's indoor volleyball, a dodge ball league or a boot camp class, participating in a regular activity that you've paid for (or have teammates counting on you for) is a fantastic way to stay active in the winter.

5. **Set a goal.** If winter weather leaves your motivation to exercise colder than an icicle, heat things up with a challenging new goal. It can be anything, such as losing those last 10 pounds, running a 5K or doing a full pull-up. But choose a goal that you *really* want to accomplish. Instead of focusing on simply working

out this winter, this type of goal-setting allows you to focus on the bigger picture.

6. **Get excited.** Focus on what you love about winter and how this time of year provides new opportunities for your fitness and health. From eating delicious in-season produce (oranges, kale and chestnuts) to curling up with a big mug of sugar-free hot cocoa in front of the fireplace after a long workout, there's much to love about winter when you embrace and appreciate it.

There are many great indoor and outdoor workout options this winter, so have fun and stay safe no matter what you do.

Source: [sparkpeople.com](http://sparkpeople.com)



### QUOTE TO NOTE

"Talk about your blessings  
more than about your  
burdens." — Anonymous

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- WeTip webinars
- Decorate with safety in mind



Festive decorations add to the spirit of the holidays, but they can also create safety concerns in classrooms and offices. Here are some ideas on how to keep the holidays both safe and fun:

- **Use flame-resistant or non-combustible decorations.**
- **Use only UL-approved lights.** Discard lights or cords that have exposed wires, loose connections or broken sockets.
- **Never plug a power tap into another power tap, creating a chain.**
- **Don't run cords under rugs or across doorways.**
- **Christmas trees on school property (if allowed by the district) must be treated** and certified for flame resistance by someone licensed to perform such treatment.
- **Don't block exits and walkways** with rearranged furniture or decorations.
- **Candles are never acceptable in classrooms or offices.**
- **Use only power taps with over-current protection and don't use extension cords.** Power taps cannot be longer than 8 feet.
- **Clean up all party treats to avoid attracting pests.**
- **Don't hang decorations from wires across classrooms.** They can interfere with intrusion alarm sensors and can be a hindrance to the maintenance staff or firefighters.

## WeTip webinars

Do you want to learn more about WeTip and how it can help your campus or work site? Schedule a webinar! Webinar training can take place online and via phone conference, so you can view the slide show and hear the training from the convenience of your own office. To schedule a webinar, contact Sue Mandell at [suemandell@wetip.com](mailto:suemandell@wetip.com) or at (909) 987-5005, ext 250.



WeTip is a safety hotline available 24 hours a day, seven days a week, all year round. The service is free to all SIA members. To help promote the program at your school or work site, you can request posters, wallet cards, magnets and more. For more information, contact Teresa Franco at [tfranco@sia-jpa.org](mailto:tfranco@sia-jpa.org) or at (916) 364-1281, ext. 256.



*The material in this newsletter should be part of your Injury and Illness Prevention Plan (IIPP).*

*Keep a copy of this newsletter in your IIPP binder and be sure all employees receive a copy.*

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