



DEMENTIA CARE AT PATHFINDER

Though dementia is progressive and does not yet have a cure, a dementia diagnosis does not mean a person with Down syndrome can no longer live a meaningful and enriched life.

For 25 years, the Kennedy Willis Center has been providing resources and subject matter expertise to family members and agencies.

Symptoms can include:

- Decline in cognitive function
- Loss of previously mastered skills and ability to perform daily routine tasks effectively
- Anxiety and Frustration
- Agitation and aggression
- Feelings of sadness or depression
- Delusions or hallucinations
- Resistance or refusal of care
- Loss of interest in previously enjoyed activities
- Sleep disturbances
- Wandering or eloping from home
- Changes in eating or appetite

DEMENTIA & DOWN SYNDROME

Today, individuals with Down syndrome are living longer and healthier lives due to advances in healthcare and an increased understanding in providing quality person-centered support.

Given greater longevity, individuals with Down syndrome have a high likelihood of developing Alzheimer's disease and showing symptoms of dementia as they age. Because the symptoms of dementia are so complex, changes in personality and behavior may be widespread across all levels of functioning.

50%

or more of adults with
Down syndrome will be
affected by some form
of dementia.

30%

of individuals with
Down syndrome
over 50 have some form
of dementia.

Some may think dementia is the same thing as memory loss, but it is actually much more complex and includes a wide range of symptoms and functional changes.

Early screening and detection is critical for individuals, families and their care team in order to implement necessary supports and care strategies.

Contact The Kennedy Willis Center on Down Syndrome to learn more about our available resources.

The Kennedy Willis Center
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ON DOWN SYNDROME

Sources:

Center for Disease Control and Prevention <https://www.cdc.gov/ncbddd/birthdefects/downsyndrome/data.html>

National Institute on Aging <https://www.nia.nih.gov/health/alzheimers-disease-people-down-syndrome#:~:text=Estimates%20suggest%20that%2050%25%20or,Alzheimer's%20disease%20as%20they%20age>

Watchman & Janicki (2019) <https://doi.org/10.1093/geront/gnx160>