

Brain Health and Aging

As with any other organ, your brain changes as you grow "less young." Although these changes are normal and expected, it is possible that your mental fitness may be affected by the aging process or by your current conditions. Diabetes, high blood pressure, heart attacks and strokes may affect the way you interact with the world and your memory. Dr. Jorge Duchicela would like for you to assess your brain health with these simple questions. You may ask yourself the questions, or you may ask for help from someone close to you:

| QUESTIONS | Y | N |
|--|---|---|
| Have you had memory changes that disrupt your daily life? Example: Relying on memory aids or family members, asking for the same information over and over. | | |
| Have you had difficulty completing familiar tasks? Example: Driving to a familiar location, remembering the rules of a favorite game. | | |
| Have you had trouble understanding visual images or spatial relationships? Example: Difficulty reading, judging distance or determining color or contrast. | | |
| Have you misplaced things and lost the ability to retrace your steps? Example: Losing your glasses and being unable to trace back your steps or accusing others of misplacing them. | | |
| Have you withdrawn from social activities or work? Example: Removing yourself from hobbies, sports, religious activities or gatherings with friends. | | |
| Have you had any challenges in planning or solving problems? Example: Following a familiar recipe or working with numbers. | | |
| Have you been confused with time or place? Example: Forgetting where you are, who the president is, what season it is or how you got to a place. | | |
| Have you had any trouble with words in speaking or writing? Example: Trouble following a conversation, stopping in the middle of a conversation or struggling with vocabulary . | | |
| Have you had unusual changes in your decision making? Example: Giving large amounts of money to telemarketers or spending money on unneeded items. | | |
| Have you had any changes in your mood or personality? Example: Being easily upset by things, feeling suspicious, fearful or anxious in normal situations. | | |

If you answered yes to any of these questions, you may need further evaluation, so please contact Dr. Duchicela's office to arrange a visit to assess your mental health.