



Initial stages of dementia and Alzheimer's

Alzheimer's disease arises from a degenerative process that entails a significant loss of neurons in several cerebral areas and a pronounced atrophy of the brain. In Spain, approximately 800,000 patients have this disease. **Dementia** is an irreversible and progressive loss of intellectual capacity that, **when diagnosed, impedes driving.**



The initial symptoms are usually altered behavior, mood and ability to express oneself. Elderly persons become more irritable and their thinking slows down.



Furthermore, they show difficulty in concentrating, move more slowly, are frequently forgetful and, sometimes, are acutely confused during a stressful situation.



Age is the main, though not only, risk factor: 12 percent of those with the disease are over the age of 75; 35 percent are over 85; and 40 percent are over 90.

6 road safety recommendations



The doctor must suspect possible alterations in one's driving

This happens when the patient becomes disoriented in familiar places, drives too slowly or too fast, or fails to obey traffic signs.



Accompanied pedestrians

These are pedestrians that must go out into the street accompanied by a caretaker to avoid being run over.



Fear of losing one's independence

A patient may refuse to stop to drive out of fear of losing one's independence, but his or her safety, as well as that of others, is the most important matter.



Cognitively impaired pedestrians

Show dangerous behaviors when walking along the street and changing direction or course.



Even if the patient seems to improve

he or she must not be permitted to drive.



Family-physician collaboration

The physician and the family must collaborate to convince the patient with Alzheimer's disease that it is best to refrain from driving.

6 recommendations for preventing accidents in the home



Prevention at home

Radiators must be fitted with a protective grille and their stopcock blocked in a central position.



Safety at windows

Verify that window frames are at the proper height to prevent anyone from falling when peeking out.



Safety at doors

Remove latches and bolts from doors that may be closed from inside.



Safeguard medication

Store all medication together and keep them under lock and key.



Protect power sockets

Purchase socket covers to protect power sockets and fit these onto all sockets that are within reach of your family member.



Avoid disorganization

This may result in situations of confusion and danger.