

How Dementia Symptoms Manifest at the Airport

Common symptoms of dementia ¹	Examples in the airport
Memory loss that disrupts daily life	Person forgets where they are traveling; Seeks assistance but rapidly forgets information provided (e.g., where to locate gate, restroom, etc.); Forgets security protocols and may exceed liquid limits, fails to remove metal from bags or something considered a carry-on weapon; Asks repetitive questions to gate agent/airport personnel
Challenges in planning/problem solving	Difficulty using self-check-in and may have trouble locating full-service counter; Unable to understand how to use the airport monitors; Does not refer to ticket for gate number
Difficulty completing familiar tasks at home, work or leisure	Has difficulty packing suitcase or carry-on bag; Has difficulty managing money transactions in airport
Confusion with time or place	Goes off to the restroom alone and cannot find the way back to the gate or travel companion; Sitting in the wrong gate area and misses flight; Does not routinely look at the time to manage the travel schedule.
Trouble understanding visual images and spatial relationships	Unable/unaware to use airport monitors; Has difficulty wayfinding and may not comprehend signage
New problems with words in speaking, writing and reading	Has difficulty following instructions or asking a clear question; Trouble reading ticket and matching to monitor for flight information
Misplacing things and losing the ability to retrace steps	Leaves ID /bags/purse/personal items/mobility device in security area and/or gate area and/or bathroom; May accuse others of stealing any of these times
Decreased or poor judgment	Difficulty following customer service lines for checking in, security, boarding and may cut in front of others; Taking food or items from stores/restaurants without paying. May wander away from travel companion. May inappropriately trust strangers.
Withdrawal from work or social activities	Appears apathetic or disinterested when airport staff try to engage
Changes in mood and personality	Becomes agitated while waiting for flight or boarding due to too much noise and large number of passengers; Walks up to small children/babies wanting to talk with them/hold them; Becomes anxious when waiting to board a flight

¹alz.org/10signs Alzheimer's Association