

This information is forwarded by the **Love Thy Neighbor Ministry** at Saint Rose of Lima Catholic Church, Milton FL. This program formerly known as **Savvy Senior** has been renamed by the source to: **Savvy Living** - The Catholic Foundation of Northwest Florida. Due to the many references, some may not be current but have many useful reference sources. Emails are sent using the Blind Carbon Copy (BCC) method.

This quality of life series focuses primarily on senior citizens plus other supplemental information. You do not have to be a Senior to make use of this information. If you know of a Senior, a parishioner or a neighbor who could use this information you are invited to give them a copy of this email. Fellowship through improved communications is guided by the second greatest commandment. Sometimes an act of kindness can be as simple as a phone call, a visit, or receipt of an email.

**Suggestion: Create a separate folder of this information for ease of future reference.**

Many back issues of Savvy Living or Savvy Senior can be found on the Santa Rosa County web site at <http://www.santarosa.fl.gov/coad/index.html>. On arrival at this page, place cursor on the button entitled **LINKS**, then holding the left mouse button down move to the right and click on the button entitled: **SENIOR SUPPORT**.

For information about our Parish, click on the following link: <http://parishesonline.com/scripts/HostedSites/Org.asp?ID=14423>

**Our parish spirit is rising, is rising.**

Memory Loss: What's Normal, What's Not?

[http://www.legacygifts.org/savvy\\_senior.jsp?WebID=GL2004-0129&D=200744](http://www.legacygifts.org/savvy_senior.jsp?WebID=GL2004-0129&D=200744)

**Dear Savvy Senior,**

I am 58 years old and have noticed that I've become more forgetful lately and it troubles me. My mother died with Alzheimer's disease about 15 years ago and I am afraid I might be next. Is my forgetfulness something I should worry about?

Forgetful Frank

Dear Frank,

Forgetfulness is something everyone experiences from time-to-time, but at what point does it indicate the beginning of a more serious problem? Here's what you should know.

### **Memory Loss**

Yes, it is true that forgetfulness and memory loss can be symptoms of more serious problems, but it doesn't necessarily mean you have Alzheimer's disease. While some memory changes are normal as we age, memory loss can also be brought on by a variety of factors like stress, lack of sleep, side effects of medications, depression, vitamin deficiencies, a head injury, thyroid disease, alcohol, a small stroke, Alzheimer's disease and more. If your forgetfulness or memory loss is starting to affect your daily life you need to see your doctor. Here are some potential warning signs that may indicate a more serious problem:

Forgetting or misplacing things much more often than you used to.

Forgetting how to do things you've done many times before.

Trouble learning new things.

Repeating phrases or stories in the same conversation.

Trouble recalling simple words or names in conversation or using inappropriate words.

Trouble making choices or handling money.

Becoming lost while driving.

Not being able to keep track of what happens each day.

Rapid mood changes for no apparent reason.

### **Memory Screening**

A memory screening is a good first step toward early detection of dementia, including Alzheimer's disease, or other types of conditions that can cause memory loss. Memory screenings (that turn out normal) can also let you

know that you're OK, which can ease your fears and provide some peace of mind. If you have some concerns about your memory loss or have a family history of Alzheimer's disease, National Memory Screening Day on Nov. 13 is a great opportunity to get tested. Initiated by the Alzheimer's Foundation of America, this is a free service that provides a confidential, face-to-face memory screening that takes about 10 minutes to complete and consists of questions and/or tasks to assess your memory, language skills, thinking ability and other intellectual functions. The screening is given by doctors, social workers or other healthcare professionals in hundreds of convenient locations in communities across the country. It's important to know that this memory screening does not diagnose an illness, but can flag a potential problem. Those who have a memory screening test that raises concerns will be encouraged to see a doctor or other healthcare professional as soon as possible. To find a screening site in your area visit [www.nationalmemoryscreening.org](http://www.nationalmemoryscreening.org) or call 866-232-8484.

### **Early Detection**

Early diagnosis is very important because many of the conditions that cause memory loss are treatable and may be reversible. And for irreversible illnesses like Alzheimer's disease, even though it can't be stopped, early detection is significant because there are several medications that, if taken early, can help delay its devastating effects. Early detection can also help families prepare themselves for the caregiving and supportive needs that lie ahead.

### **Savvy Tip**

The Alzheimer's Association offers a list of common symptoms to help you recognize the difference between normal age-related memory changes and possible warning signs of Alzheimer's disease. They can also put you in touch with your local chapter that can help