

## What's The Difference Between Alzheimer's and Dementia?



"What's the difference between dementia and Alzheimer's?" It's a common question, [BLUE WATER HOMECARE](#) and doctors are some of the best at confusing us. Physicians seem to prefer the word "dementia," possibly because Alzheimer's has become such a loaded word. "Dementia" somehow sounds less frightening to many people, and now even the experts have started using the words interchangeably. They aren't interchangeable. Alzheimer's Disease and dementia are two very different things. Dementia is a symptom. Pain is a symptom, and many different injuries and illnesses can cause pain. When you go to the doctor because you hurt, you won't be satisfied if the doctor diagnoses "pain" and sends you home. You want to know what is causing the pain, and how to treat it. "Dementia" simply means the symptom of a deterioration of intellectual abilities resulting from an unspecified disease or disorder of the brain. Alzheimer's Disease is one disease/disorder that causes dementia. Many other illnesses or "syndromes" can also cause dementia. Parkinson's Disease can cause dementia. A stroke can cause dementia. Even dehydration can cause dementia. Many of the things that can cause dementia are treatable, even potentially curable. If you have taken your elder to the doctor and received a diagnosis of "dementia" you haven't received a diagnosis at all. Unless you know what is causing the dementia you can't begin to treat its root cause. If your physician has diagnosed "dementia" it's time for a second opinion. You are probably dealing either with a physician who is not comfortable with the truth, or one who doesn't know how (or doesn't want to bother) to differentiate between all the possible causes of dementia. Either way, a skilled geriatrician or a neurologist who is comfortable with seniors would be a good place to start.