

## Types of Dementia

Dementia is a general term for loss of memory and other mental abilities severe enough to interfere with daily life. It is caused by physical changes in the brain. A few decades ago, only a few medical specialists would have heard of Alzheimer's disease. "Senility" was considered inevitable for anyone who lived long enough. As understanding of the brain has grown, science has been able to identify and differentiate many causes of dementia. Alzheimer's disease is the most common type of dementia, but other brain disorders can and do frequently cause dementia.

Other types of dementia often present themselves with very similar symptoms. Even trained physicians may have a trouble determining for certain which type of dementia a patient has, and some people experience multiple types of dementia concurrently. The recognised types of dementia are listed below.

Type	Symptoms	Brain Changes	Cure
Alzheimer's dementia	Difficulty remembering recent conversations; Difficulty remembering names or events is often an early clinical symptom; Memory loss, confusion, difficulty communicating, anxiousness, paranoia; Apathy and depression are also often early symptoms.; Later symptoms include impaired communication, poor judgment, disorientation, confusion, behavioural changes and difficulty speaking, swallowing and walking;	Hallmark abnormalities are deposits of the protein fragment beta-amyloid (plaques) and twisted strands of the protein tau (tangles) as well as evidence of nerve cell damage and death in the brain.	None
Vascular Dementia	Also known as "multi-infarct dementia" or "post-stroke dementia" and is the second most common cause of dementia. Memory loss, impaired judgment, decrease ability to plan, loss of motivation, unsteady gait, wandering at night, depression, decreased ability to organize thoughts or actions, decreased ability to analyze situations, effective planning and cooperation likely to be symptoms; Damage to blood vessels in the brain and reduced ability to supply the brain with large quantities of nutrients and oxygen, which are necessary for thought processes.	Brain imaging can often detect blood vessel problems implicated in vascular dementia. Pathologic evidence shows that the brain changes of several types of dementia can be present simultaneously. Cause; bleeding within the brain from a stroke causing brain damage or from brain injuries causing microscopic bleeding and blood vessel blockage.	None
Dementia with Lewy bodies	The third most common cause of dementia, and is also called "cortical Lewy body disease" or "diffuse Lewy body disease"; Memory loss and thinking problems in common with Alzheimer's; More likely than people with Alzheimer's to have initial or early symptoms such as sleep disturbances, well-formed visual hallucinations, and muscle rigidity or other parkinsonian movement features.	Lewy bodies are abnormal aggregations (or clumps) of the protein alpha-synuclein; When they develop in a part of the brain called the cortex, dementia can result.; Alpha-synuclein also aggregates in the brains of people with Parkinson's disease, but in a different pattern	None
Mixed Dementia	When any two or more types of dementia are present at the same time, the individual is considered to have "mixed dementia"; In mixed dementia abnormalities linked to more than one type of dementia occur simultaneously in the brain. Recent studies suggest that mixed dementia is more common than previously thought.	Characterized by the hallmarks of more than one type of dementia ;Most commonly, Alzheimer's and vascular dementia, but also other types, such as dementia with Lewy bodies.	None

Parkinson's Disease	Problems with movement are a common symptom early in the disease. If dementia develops, symptoms are often similar to dementia with Lewy bodies.	Alpha-synuclein clumps are likely to begin in an area deep in the brain called the substantia nigra; These clumps are thought to cause degeneration of the nerve cells ;that produce dopamine.	None for dementia
Frontotemporal Dementia	Fairly rare, but believed to be the fourth most common type of dementia.; Marked more by behavioral and personality changes than by cognitive impairment.; Memory is preserved in people with frontotemporal dementia; Decreased inhibition (frequently leading to inappropriate behavior); Apathy and loss of motivation; Decreased empathy; Repetitive of compulsive behaviours; Anxiety and depression; Difficulty with language.	People with FTD generally develop symptoms at a younger age (at about age 60) and survive for fewer years than those with Alzheimer's; Nerve cells in the front and side regions of the brain are especially affected.	None
Cruetzfeldt-Jakob Disease	CJD is the most common human form of a group of rare, fatal brain disorders affecting people and certain other mammals; Variant CJD ("mad cow disease") occurs in cattle, and has been transmitted to people under certain circumstances; Rapidly fatal disorder that impairs memory and coordination and causes behavioural changes.	Results from misfolded prion protein that causes a "domino effect" in which prion protein throughout the brain misfolds and thus malfunctions.	None
Wernicke-Korsakoff Syndrome	Korsakoff syndrome is a chronic memory disorder caused by severe deficiency of thiamine (vitamin B-1). The most common cause is alcohol misuse. Memory problems may be strikingly severe while other thinking and social skills seem relatively unaffected.	Thiamine helps brain cells produce energy from sugar; When thiamine levels fall too low, brain cells cannot generate enough energy to function properly.	Treatment Available