

Dementia: A Short Note

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Dementia

Dementia is a chronic illness, which describes the various symptoms of cognitive. Dementia is a forgetfulness disorders which includes impairment in thinking, communication and memory.

According to 2010 census around 4.7 million people 65 years or older in the United States living with Alzheimer's disease. The Alzheimer's Association estimates that:

- Over a 10th of people aged 65 years or more are having Alzheimer's disease
- This proportion rises to one third of people aged 85 and older
- All cases of Alzheimer's accounts for dementia 60-80 percent

Dementia may cause by the death of brain cells. However, the causes of brain cell death or the brain cell death it is not known yet. But, alzheimer's disease, dementia can be caused by a head injury, by a stroke, or by a brain tumor, and other causes.

Dementia also be caused by the following reasons

Prion diseases – for instance, CJD (Creutzfeldt-Jakob disease)

HIV –the virus may damage brain cells is not certain, but it is known to occur.

Reversible factors – some dementias can be treated by reversing the effects of underlying causes, including medication interactions, depression, vitamin deficiencies, and thyroid abnormalities.

There are several stages in dementia. It is divided into four main stages. They are

- Mild cognitive impairment: It is characterized by the general forgetfulness. It affects many people.
- Mild dementia: Individuals with mild dementia will experience the cognitive impairments that occasionally impact their daily routine life. Symptoms like confusion, memory loss , difficulty in planning, carrying out tasks, and personality changes.
- Moderate dementia: In this stage people will face difficult and becomes more challenging in their daily life, and they may need more help. Individuals may need help in getting dressed and combing their hair, personality changes like becoming suspicious or agitated for no reason. There are also likely to have sleep disturbances.
- Severe dementia: In this stage, symptoms have worsened considerably. There may be a chance of losing ability to communicate, and the individual might need full-time care. Simple tasks, such as sitting and holding one's head up become impossible. They may loss Bladder control.

There are several types of dementia, including:

- Alzheimer's disease is characterized by "plaques" between the dying cells in the brain and "tangles" within the cells (both occurs due to abnormalities of protein).
- Dementia with Lewy bodies is a neurodegenerative condition which is linked to abnormal structures in the brain.
- Mixed dementia refers to a diagnosis of two or three types occur together. For instance, a person may show both Alzheimer's disease and vascular dementia at the same time.
- Parkinson's disease is also marked by the presence of Lewy bodies. Although Parkinson's is often considered as a disorder of movement, it may also lead to dementia.
- Huntington's disease is also characterized by specific types of uncontrolled movements but includes in dementia.

Possible symptoms of dementia:

- Memory loss
- Difficulty completing familiar tasks like cooking, drinking
- May face problem to communicate
- Disorientation
- Problems with thinking
- Misplacing things like forgetting the location of everyday items such as wallet, money, keys, etc
- Rapid mood swings
- Personality changes
- Loss of initiative means showing less interest in starting something or going somewhere

Other disorders leading to symptoms of dementia include:

Front temporal dementia is also known as Pick's disease.

Normal pressure hydrocephalus when more cerebrospinal fluid accumulates in brain.

Posterior cortical atrophy resembles the changes seen in Alzheimer's disease but in a different parts of the brain.

Down syndrome also increases the likelihood of young-onset Alzheimer's.

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