

Types of Dementia

Dementia is a loss of skills to think, remember and reason that is severe enough to affect daily activities. It is normal to need more time to remember things as we get older. Other thinking and reasoning skills should not change with age. There are different causes of dementia. Some can be treated and some cannot. Have a medical exam to learn the cause of dementia.

Common Causes of Dementia

Alzheimer's Disease

- Alzheimer's is the most common cause of dementia.
- It occurs from changes in the nerve cells of the brain.
- No one knows what causes Alzheimer's. It cannot be cured and will not go away.
- Signs include memory loss, confusion, poor judgement, and changes in language. These start slowly and worsen over time.
- Medicine can help slow down the disease or help with signs.

Vascular Dementia

- Vascular dementia is also known as multi-infarct dementia.
- Small blockages cause strokes that destroy small parts of the brain. You may not know when they occur.
- This dementia cannot be cured and will not go away.
- Signs can appear suddenly and vary on where the stroke was in the brain. New signs may occur with more strokes.
- Medicines and lifestyle changes can help keep the damage from getting worse.

Parkinson's Disease

- Parkinson's disease affects the part of the brain that controls muscle movement.
- There is no cure. This disease often progresses slowly and the signs can be managed.
- The 4 most common signs of this disease are tremors, muscle stiffness, slow movement, and problems with balance and movement. As Parkinson's gets worse, some people develop dementia.
- Medicine, physical therapy and surgery are used to manage signs.

Normal Pressure Hydrocephalus (NPH)

- NPH is a rare condition where the flow of brain fluid is blocked. When the fluid builds up, it causes pressure on the brain.
- Swelling in the brain from infection, bleeding or injury may cause NPH. A brain scan, MRI or CT scan can help find this disease.
- Signs of NPH include memory loss and changes in the way a person walks.
- Surgery may help lessen these signs.

Talk to your doctor or nurse if you have any questions or concerns about dementia.