

Dementia Awareness Week

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Received: May 14, 2021; Accepted: May 28, 2021; Published: June 04, 2021

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Introduction

Dementia Action Week is a historic landmark that promotes action to improve the lives of people with dementia. It is honoured on 17-23 May 2021, marking the devastating impact, and true experience, of coronavirus on the dementia community. We all have a role to play in making the world a dementia-friendly place to live and that's what Dementia Awareness Week is all about.

What is Dementia?

Dementia refers to a group of neurological degenerative disorders and symptoms marked by a decrease in the cognitive ability of the individual as well as impairing one's activities of daily living. Dementia involves various distinctive disorders, which might lead to generic symptoms mentioned, each of which is an own disease. There is currently no cure for dementia, however certain therapies can halt the clinical deterioration.

5 things to know about Dementia

1. It not a natural part of aging
2. Dementia is cause by a disease of the brain
3. It's not just about losing you memory
4. People with dementia can still live well
5. Alzheimer Society will help anyone affected by dementia

Prevalence and Types

Dementia is predicted to impact over 50 million people worldwide (as of 2018) and is expected to increase to over 150 million by 2050. Dementia is most often caused by

- Alzheimer's Disease (AD)
- Vascular Dementia (VaD)
- Dementia with Lewy Bodies (DLB)
- Frontotemporal Dementia (FTD)
- Limbic-Predominant Age-Related TDP-43 Encephalopathy (LATE)
- Posterior Cortical Atrophy (PCA)

Additional disorders may potentially lead to dementia

- Parkinson's Disease (PD)
- Huntington's Disease (HD)
- Down Syndrome
- Creutzfeldt-Jakob Disease
- Korsakoff Syndrome

It is possible to have two or more of the conditions listed at the same time in what is known as mixed dementia.

Symptoms

Dementia symptoms vary greatly depending on the kind of dementia (described above), the age of onset, severity, and stage of disease progression. Severe pathogenic alterations in the brain have already occurred by the time the first visible symptoms appear. Unlike frequent amnesia or a decline in mental ability that might be attributed to old age, dementia is more evident and worsens over time or quickly in certain cases.

Diagnosis

In addition to cognitive tests such as MMSE, motor tests, and biochemical tests of blood/urine to exclude other conditions, infections, and diseases, diagnoses of different types of dementia are usually done by applying a range of structural and functional neuroimaging techniques, like MRI, PET/SPECT and CT scans.

Another important for a better prognosis is a differential diagnosis between different kinds of dementia, since some of the medicines used for the treatment of some conditions might aggravate some of the other. Although certain diagnosis may show mixed dementia, which is more difficult to identify and manage.

Treatment

Limited medications are routinely administered to manage some of the cognitive and behavioral symptoms associated with dementia, while none can change the course of a disease.

Mixed dementia

Mixed dementia, also known as multifactorial dementia is the most frequent type of dementia in the elderly population. A combination of Alzheimer's and vascular dementia are quite often prevalent in mixed dementia. Since mixed dementia is so pervasive in adults it is indeed plausible that age-related changes in the body are linked to the aetiology of this neurodegenerative condition.

Awareness

Help raise as much Dementia Awareness as possible through publishing your research. Journal of Alzheimers Disease and Parkinsonism aims to provide opportunity to the Scientific Community to share their research and inspire wider participation to make Dementia Awareness Week a new norm in research and development.