



DEMENTIA

PATIENT INFORMATION BOOKLET



Lilavati Hospital and Research Centre
More than Healthcare, Human Care



WHAT IS DEMENTIA?

- Dementia refers to a gradual decline in cognitive abilities, resulting in difficulties with daily tasks and activities
- It encompasses various conditions affecting memory, thinking, personality, and behavior
- Initially, changes may be subtle, but over time they worsen, impacting everyday functioning.

CAUSES:

- Dementia is caused by physical changes in the brain. The most common cause of dementia is degeneration, causing damage to or loss of neurons and connections in the brain.
- It can also result from blocked blood flow to the brain, depriving it of oxygen and nutrients.
- In some cases, deficiencies in electrolytes such as sodium, etc can also lead to dementia like symptoms.
- Viral infections can also lead to dementia like symptoms.

SYMPTOMS



recent events, misplacing items.
Repeating words or conversations.
Delay in remembering things,
events, names.

Confabulation, which means they
will fill the gaps in their memory
by making up false stories or by
substituting facts.

2. LANGUAGE CHANGES:

Problems communicating like
following a conversation or word
finding

Trouble following conversations

Frequent word substitutions

Reduced speech or word output



3. CHANGES IN THINKING CAPACITY:

Problem with simple and complex
tasks, planning and organizing

Getting confused or lost while
walking or driving even in familiar
areas.

Confusion and disorientation

4. BEHAVIORAL CHANGES:

Personality change

Depression & Anxiety

Withdrawal from work and social
activities.

Being overly suspicious

Hallucinations (seeing objects and
people that aren't there) /

Delusions (illogical beliefs)

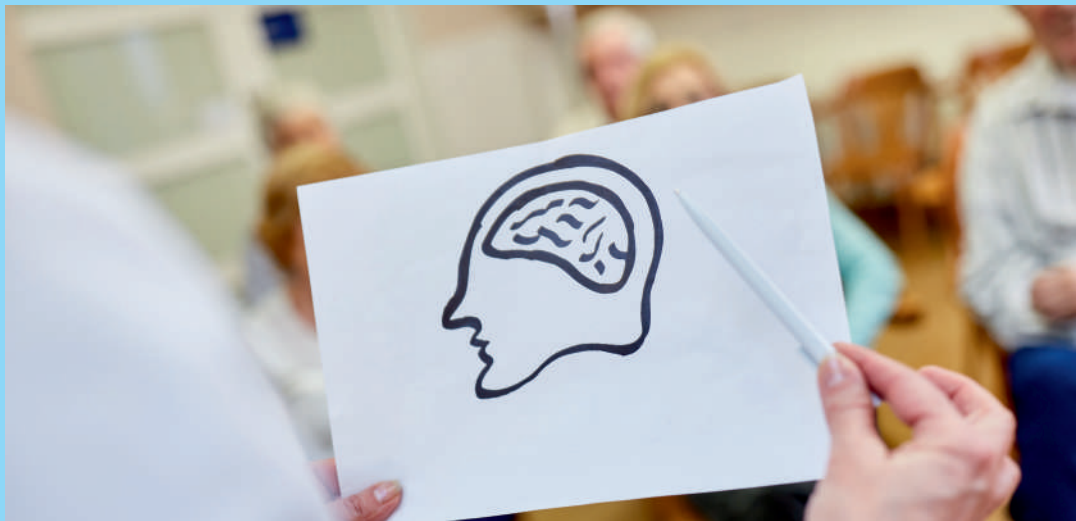
Inappropriate social and sexual
behavior



Every patient of dementia doesn't
have the same symptoms.
Symptoms vary according to the
area that is affected. But common
symptoms are:

1. MEMORY CHANGES:

Forgetting names, things or



TREATMENT

Dementia is a neurodegenerative disease. While the damage done to the brain can't be reversed or cured, a correctly balanced prescription and other measures can help manage symptoms.

Along with medication, allied rehabilitation in the following fields can significantly improve the quality of life:

1) Neuropsychologist- To assess and monitor decline in cognitive functioning and to plan Cognitive Stimulation and Rehabilitation programs according to individual needs.

2) Psychologist/ Counsellor - To help with emotional, behavioural and sleep related issues and support for caregiver.

WHEN TO CONSULT A DOCTOR IN ADDITION TO ROUTINE FOLLOW UPS:

If the patient's appetite and/ or weight reduces suddenly.

If the patient is experiencing increased difficulty in swallowing or has been choking frequently.

If the patient has had sudden changes in mood or level of aggression.

If the patient has been experiencing hallucinations that cause him/her distress.

Drowsiness/ fever/ imbalance/slurred speech.



ADDITIONAL THINGS THAT CAN HELP:

1. A balanced diet – Feel free to contact us for a diet consult.
2. Regular exercise- such as
 - Static cycling
 - Walking
 - Swimming
 - Gardening
 - Dancing
 - Water aerobics or stretching
3. Continuing daily living activities such as dressing, eating, bathing as independently as possible.
4. Finding support groups, which are groups of people who have lived through the same difficult experiences and want to help themselves and others by sharing coping strategies.

FOR THE CAREGIVER:

Caregiving to patients with dementia is rewarding yet quite stressful. The responsibilities of caregiving may increase as the disease progresses.

The primary symptom of the disease is memory loss. It can be tough to watch your loved one forget their precious memories. The mental and physical responsibilities can be overwhelming and exhausting.

Caregivers often face stress or burnout. Signs of the same are:

Feeling physically drained and mental exhaustion

Not getting enough sleep

Irritability

Difficulty concentrating

Withdrawal from friends, family and activities that were once enjoyable

Changes in mood

Feelings of futility/ depression



TIPS FOR THE CAREGIVER

The inability to recall can be upsetting for the patient, so avoid pressuring them to remember specific events. If they don't recall details accurately, it's best to overlook the discrepancies. Refrain from correcting or urging them to remember things precisely.

The patients may have fluctuations in their behavior and forgetfulness, level of consciousness, attention etc. Note that this is a common phenomenon in dementia. Patients may exhibit reduced patience, tolerance, and social restraint, with caregivers noticing heightened irritability. If these behavioural shifts don't pose harm to the patient or others, it's best to be understanding and accommodating towards them.

The patient may become excessively mistrustful, possibly experiencing Capgras syndrome.

This condition makes the patient believe that their caregiver has been replaced by someone intending to harm them. In such instances, try not to take offense. Avoid comparing the patient to others or to their younger self.

Avoid attempting to reason with the patient or anticipate logical behaviors.

The patient may wish to alter routines, such as meal times or bathing schedules. Allow them to make these adjustments. If the patient opts for multiple smaller meals instead of one large one, it's acceptable as long as it doesn't compromise their health.

However, excessive consumption of unhealthy snacks like chips and chocolates should be discouraged.

TIPS FOR THE CAREGIVER

As dementia advances, the patient's inhibitions may decrease. Monitor for any inappropriate social/ sexual behaviours.

Ensure that all doors and windows are shut. Monitor the patient's location closely and ensure they are always accompanied. The patient should carry a dementia card or wear a bracelet.

Notify the community security guard to prevent the patient from leaving the premises unaccompanied. Make sure that the patient always carries his/her dementia card. Inform the society watchman about the patient's condition and give instructions as to not let the patient outside the society alone and to inform the family in such situations. Inform the closest police station about the patient's condition.

Think about getting a caretaker for the patient, whose only job will be to attend the patient. It is necessary that the caretaker should form a healthy bond with the patient and so getting on in the early

stages of the dementia will be helpful. Prefer to employ a caregiver of the same gender.

If and when the dementia gets severe, the family might have to make a few changes, taking into consideration the legal aspects. Install CCTVs in the house if required. Get the patient's signature digitalized. We can issue



a certificate for banking and legal purposes. Invalidate the legal/banking procedures unless also countersigned by a family member as witness.



In many cases, the family or the caregiver find it difficult to cope with the stress of having to attend a patient for a long time or months or years.

For such cases, we have arranged for a tie up with an institution and

a nursing home, where the patient can be looked after by trained nurses and caregivers while we arrange for a short or long-term holiday for the caregiver or family.

Please feel free to inquire about the same.





THINGS NECESSARY FOR FOLLOW UPS OR EMERGENCIES

1. Write down your symptoms or any questions the reasons or that you have for scheduling the appointment- this aids the treatment process.

2. Make a list of the patient's past medical history which will include list of medication, investigations done so far etc.

3. For emergencies- Write down patient's personal details, emergency contact numbers, treating doctor's emergency contact, ambulance, primary and secondary caregiver's contact



Lilavati Hospital and Research Centre

More than Healthcare, Human Care

NABH Accredited Healthcare Provider

A-791, Bandra Reclamation, Bandra (W), Mumbai - 400 050.

Tel.: +91-22-6931 8000 / +91-22-5059 1000

Email: hcu@lilavatihospital.com • **Website:** www.lilavatihospital.com