



Different Path Services

Dementia Handout

If your family member has been diagnosed with dementia, you are likely worried about what it will look like and what the progression will be like. While everybody is different and their progression will be different, it is true to say that there is gradual decline in cognition over time. There will be good days and bad days, and there can be times where things are relatively stable. With dementia, there are usually good times of the day where the individual is more present. Dinnertime, or late afternoon is generally reported to be a difficult time of day for individuals with dementia. The following are some different types of dementia. While many people have a combination, there are some differences worth noting in the presentation of dementia in individuals based on the type:

- Alzheimer's
 - Most common type of dementia. Types include “early onset”, and then the more typical type that appears as individuals age (65 plus). 80% of dementia is Alzheimer's. Characterized by forgetting; short term memory. Often forget more recent events/people, but can remember childhood memories easily.
- Vascular Dementia
 - Second most common type of dementia. Created when blood flow in the brain is blocked, and cells die.
- Lewy Body Dementia
 - Third most common type of dementia.
 - Often has symptoms involving hallucinations and delusions.
 - Individuals may “act out” their dreams
- Parkinson's Dementia
 - Dementia that comes with Parkinson's disease, which has neurological symptoms. Not all people with Parkinson's develop the dementia.
- Fronto-Temporal Dementia
 - It is a group of disorders that show a loss of function in the frontal part of the brain. Less common type of dementia. There are two types.
- Creutzfeld- Jacob Disease

- Rare, affects 1 in a million. Progresses quickly, and can be familial, acquired or from an external source (contamination).

Other Disorders:

- Stroke

- Effects of a stroke vary according to what part of the brain is damaged. Stroke symptoms can look like dementia; brain damage from a stroke can look like dementia. Strokes often affect only one side of the body. The person's speech is often affected.

- Delirium

- There is an organic cause (infection, disease)
- The individual has hallucinations, delusions, and mental confusion. It can also look like psychosis.
- Delirium passes with treatment of the cause, but individuals may not recover to their previous level of cognition.