

Dementia in the Elderly- What Their Behaviors Tell Us



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Objectives



- Define dementia and identify different types
- Identify common behaviors associated with dementia
- Identify ways of understanding behaviors
- Learn intervention and behavior management strategies
- Review staff self care strategies

Foundations for Care Giving



- **Three Most Important Things to Know**

Dementia Overview



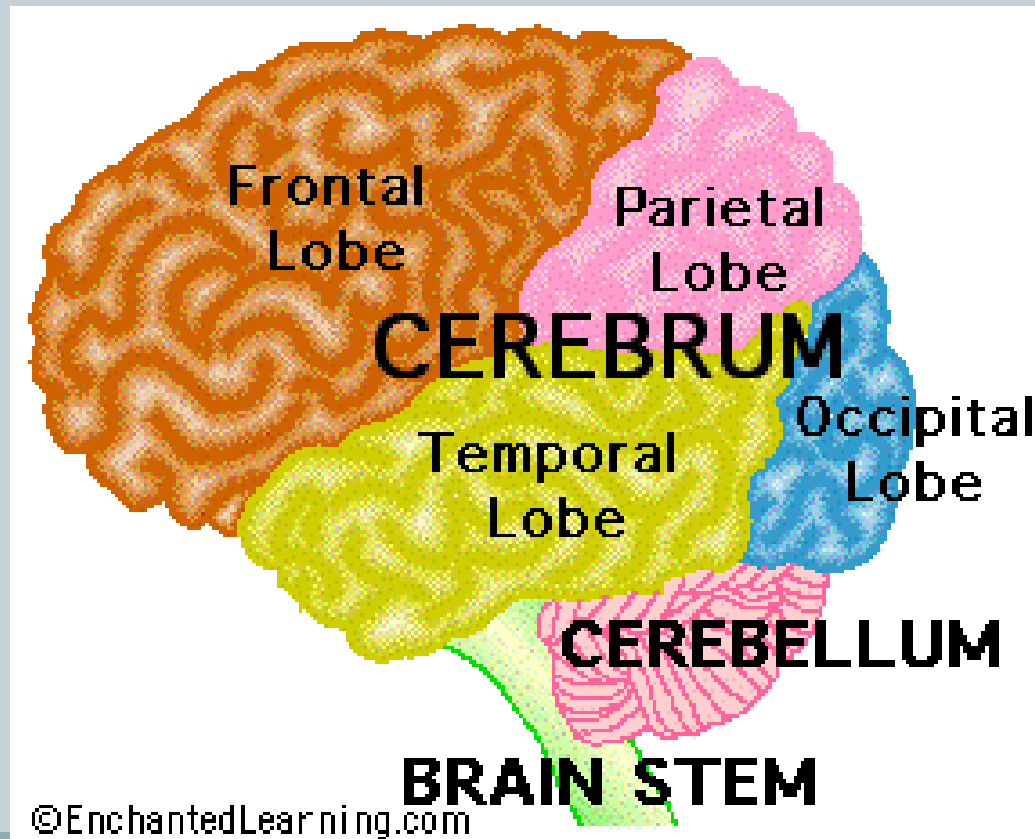
Dementia is a clinical state characterized by loss of function in multiple cognitive domains

- Gradual onset, irreversible, chronic, and progressive
- Confusion
- Withdrawal
- Shortened attention span
- Impaired memory
- Difficulty with abstraction, problems with finding words, and confabulates
- Struggles to remain independent

The Brain-



Dementia is an underlying disease that damages brain tissue, leading to disturbed brain function.



Types of Dementia



Degenerative Diseases

- Alzheimer's Disease
- Pick's Disease

Vascular Dementia

- Multi-infarct Dementia

Anoxic Dementia

- Resulting from cardiac arrest

Degenerative Disorder

- Huntington's Disease

Neurological Disease

- Parkinson's Disease

Other Dementia's

- Alcohol-induced
- Brain Injury

Stages of Dementia/Alzheimer's Type



- Stage 1- No symptoms of Alzheimer's are seen
- Stage 2- Forgetfulness
- Stage 3- Confusion Early Stage
- Stage 4- Confusion Late Stage
- Stage 5- Dementia Early Stage
- Stage 6- Dementia Middle Stage
- Stage 7- Dementia Late Stage

Examples of Difficult Behaviors



- Aggressive/Combative
- Paranoia
- Restless
- Disinhibited Verbal Behavior
- Disinhibited Sexual Behavior
- Disinhibited Social Behavior
- Anxiety
- Inability to follow rules/cooperate

Reasons for Difficult Behaviors



- Physical health factors
- Emotional health factors
- Environmental factors
- Communication barriers

Understanding Behavior Triggers



Physical Factors

Illness
Inability to perceive hot or cold temperatures
Vision or hearing problems

Environmental Factors

Looks institutional
Poor lighting
Noisy
Too hot or too cold
Too much stimulation
Lacks privacy

Emotional Factors

Fatigue
Depression
Humiliation
Feeling rushed
Boredom
Mistrust of the Caregiver

Communication Factors

Language gap between generations
Unable to hear
Unable to understand fast talkers
It takes too much energy

Assessments to Consider



- UA/UC
- CBC
- Electrolytes
- TSH/Thyroid
- Respiratory Assessment
- Pain
- Sleep Hygiene
- Intake and Output/Dehydration
- Medication changes
- Acute exacerbations of chronic conditions

Behavior Management Strategies



- Learn previous routines
- Assess pain
- Converse instead of focusing on the task
- Provide privacy
- Make patient comfortable
- DO NOT argue
- Use rewards

Communication is Key



- Know and understand the person
- Remember your tone of voice
- Encourage them to do the task
- Talk with the family and manage expectations
- Be patient

Stress Management for Staff



- Take time out before moving on with other patient care tasks
- Identify ways to change the approach if necessary
- Debrief with colleagues, get support and feedback
- Be able to hand off the care to a colleague if the situation is too challenging
- Maintain a positive work and personal life balance

Thank You



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