



Journal Homepage: - www.journalijar.com

INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF ADVANCED RESEARCH (IJAR)

Article DOI: 10.21474/IJAR01/18748

DOI URL: <http://dx.doi.org/10.21474/IJAR01/18748>



RESEARCH ARTICLE

NAVIGATING THE LANDSCAPE OF DEMENTIA: A HOLISTIC GUIDE TO UNDERSTANDING, DETECTING, AND SUPPORTING INDIVIDUALS

Mrinal Tripathi

2nd Year Undergraduate Student, Bennett University.

Manuscript Info

Manuscript History

Received: 19 March 2024

Final Accepted: 25 April 2024

Published: May 2024

Key words:-

Treatment: While There is no Cure, Treatments Focus on Symptom Management, Enhancing Quality Of Life, And Supporting Caregivers

Abstract

Dementia, a collective term for various progressive neurodegenerative diseases, presents a significant challenge in healthcare, particularly with the global increase in the ageing population. This article explores the prevalence, stages, types, diagnostic approaches, and treatment options for dementia. By delving into these aspects, the aim is to foster a deeper understanding and empathy towards individuals affected by dementia and their caregivers.

Copy Right, IJAR, 2024., All rights reserved.

Introduction:-

Dementia encompasses a range of progressive neurodegenerative diseases, posing formidable challenges in healthcare as the global population ages. According to the World Alzheimer Report 2015, over 50 million people worldwide were living with dementia in 2020, a figure projected to nearly double every 20 years.^[1] Much of this increase will occur in developing countries, significantly impacting low and middle-income nations.

Understanding Dementia

Dementia manifests as a decline in cognitive function, affecting memory, executive function, language, attention, and visuospatial abilities due to the gradual loss and death of nerve cells. Its progression exacerbates symptoms over time, posing significant challenges for both affected individuals and their caregivers.

Stages Of Dementia

Dementia unfolds across several stages:

1. Pre-Dementia Stage (up to 10 years before onset): Subtle signs, such as anosmia, emerge with no noticeable impairment in daily functioning.
2. Early Stage (up to 2 years): Forgetfulness becomes apparent, impacting daily tasks, financial management, planning, and organising.
3. Middle Stage (2 to 4 years): Significant cognitive decline, difficulty acquiring new information, and increased need for personal care. Anxiety, restlessness, and disorientation become more pronounced.
4. Late Stage (1 to 2 years): Profound cognitive regression, loss of speech, and prevalence of depression, anxiety, and hallucinations.

Types Of Dementia

Understanding the nuances of each type of dementia is crucial for accurate diagnosis and management:^[2]

1. Alzheimer's Disease: Characterised by abnormal protein accumulations, primarily affecting the hippocampus, parietal, and temporal lobes.

Corresponding Author:- Mrinal Tripathi

Address:- 2nd Year Undergraduate Student, Bennett University.

2. **Vascular Dementia:** Caused by reduced blood flow to neurons, often related to strokes and conditions like hypertension and diabetes.
3. **Lewy Body Dementia:** Involves spherical deposits of α -synuclein and ubiquitin aggregates in neurons.
4. **Frontotemporal Dementia:** Common in individuals under 65, linked to genetic factors and conditions like Down syndrome.

Diagnosis

Diagnosing dementia involves:

1. **Clinical History and Physical Examination:** Identifying risk factors and assessing cognitive changes over time.
2. **Mental State Examination:** Evaluating memory, attention, language, and executive function.
3. **CT Imaging:** Ruling out other conditions that mimic dementia.
4. **Lab Investigations (Blood Tests):** Identifying reversible causes of cognitive impairment.
5. **Genetic Testing:** Detecting genetic mutations associated with hereditary dementia.

Treatment

While a cure for dementia remains elusive, interventions aim to manage symptoms and support quality of life:

1. **Cholinesterase Inhibitors:** Improve cognitive function in Alzheimer's disease.
2. **NMDA Receptor Antagonists:** Manage symptoms in moderate to severe Alzheimer's disease.
3. **Non-Pharmacological Interventions:** Include behavioural support, personal comfort monitoring, mental health support, and aerobic exercise.
4. **Caregiver Involvement:** Emphasises a holistic approach, education, support groups, and advanced care planning.

Conclusion:-

Dementia profoundly impacts individuals and their families, requiring comprehensive understanding and support. By exploring its stages, types, diagnostic methods, and treatments, this article aims to enhance awareness and empathy towards those affected by dementia, ultimately fostering a more supportive and informed community.

References:-

1. Guerchet, M., & Prince, M. (2020). Numbers of people with dementia worldwide: An update to the estimates in the World Alzheimer Report 2015.
2. The University of Queensland. (2017, November 24). Types of dementia.
3. Understanding Dementia (Alzheimer's & Vascular & Frontotemporal & Lewy Body Dementia), Rhesus Medicine. (2022, October 3).