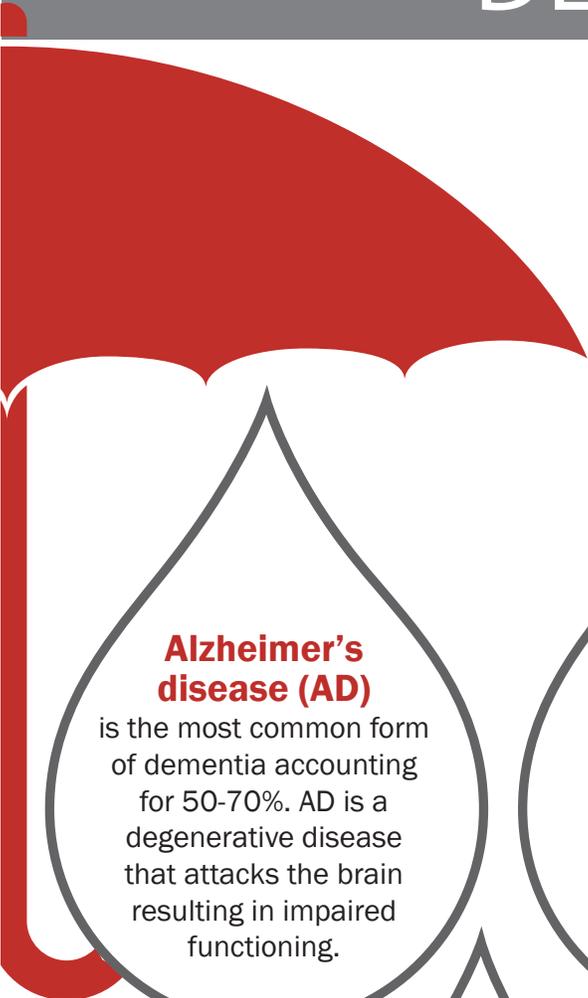


# DEMENTIA



**Defined:** An umbrella term used to describe the symptoms of a group of more than 100 conditions that impair memory behaviors and thinking. The most common causes of dementia are outlined below.

## **Alzheimer's disease (AD)**

is the most common form of dementia accounting for 50-70%. AD is a degenerative disease that attacks the brain resulting in impaired functioning.

## **Fronto-temporal dementia (FTD)**

accounts for 5% of dementia cases. FTD is associated with rounded and tangled bundles of protein in brain nerve cells.

## **Parkinson's disease (PD)**

accounts for 5% of dementia cases. PD is a degenerative disorder of the central nervous system.

## **Vascular dementia (VaD)**

is the second most common form of dementia accounting for 20% cases. VaD occurs through a reduced blood supply to the brain usually due to a stroke.

## **Dementia with Lewy bodies (DLB)**

accounts for 15% of dementia cases. DLB is associated with Lewy bodies which are abnormal brain cells.

The symptoms we call "dementia" can have many different causes. Alzheimer's disease is the most common.

# CLINICAL FEATURES OF VARIOUS DEMENTIAS

## Alzheimer's disease (AD)

**Memory, visual-spatial and language disturbances**

Indifference • Delusions  
Agitation • Behavioral changes

## Dementia with Lewy bodies (DLB)

**Visual hallucinations**

Delusions • Falls  
Syncope • Parkinsonism  
Fluctuating memory  
Sensitivity to anti-psychotic medications

## Fronto-temporal dementia (FTD)

**Personality changes**

Executive dysfunction  
Disinhibition • Impulsivity  
Progressive loss of speech

## Vascular dementia (VaD)

**Abrupt onset**

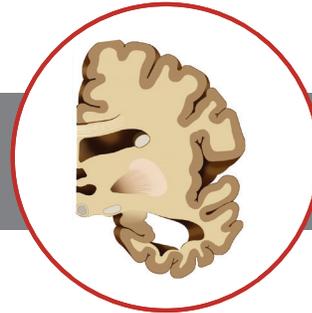
Stepwise deterioration  
Prominent aphasia • Motor dysfunction  
Mood or behavior changes  
Severe depression symptoms

Although the brain neuropathy will differ, caregivers need to note the nature of the behaviors exhibited.

Healthy  
Brain



Alzheimer's  
Brain



## WHY IS IT IMPORTANT OR USEFUL TO KNOW TYPES OF DEMENTIA?

Different types of dementia have different characteristics. It can be helpful to know that particular behaviors are part of the disease process and not bad behavior.

- Lewy body - visual hallucinations
- Fronto-temporal - profound personality change, disinhibition

The type of dementia may impact what medications are used:

- Lewy body - sensitivity to certain anti-psychotics
- Fronto-temporal - does not respond to common Alzheimer's medications such as Aricept

Ensure that treatable causes of symptoms have been ruled out.



[www.MindandMemory.org](http://www.MindandMemory.org)

11/29/16

