Dementia

Abi Harrison-Nye

Symptoms

- Persistent memory loss, especially forgetting recent events or names.
- Difficulty planning, following recipes, or keeping track of bills.
- Confusion about time and place, or getting lost in familiar areas.

Age & Gender

- Most common in people over 65, though 'young-onset' affects many.
- Females are more likely to develop it and often live longer with it.

Misconceptions

- It’s not a natural part of ageing, it’s a brain disease.
- It’s not just 'forgetfulness', it affects mood and personality too.
- It’s not the same for everyone, there are over 100 different types.

Diagnosis

- GPs perform memory tests and check for other physical causes.
- Brain scans like CT or MRI identify physical changes in the brain.
- Specialists assess language, problem-solving, and attention skills.

Treatment

- Medication can temporarily slow down the worsening of symptoms.
- Cognitive stimulation therapy keeps the mind active and engaged.
- Occupational therapy helps adapt the home for safety and ease.

Support

- Speak clearly in short sentences and avoid asking too many questions.
- Maintain a consistent routine to help them feel secure.
- Focus on their feelings rather than correcting their facts.

This information isn't a diagnostic tool. If you recognise these symptoms in yourself or others, please contact a doctor.

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