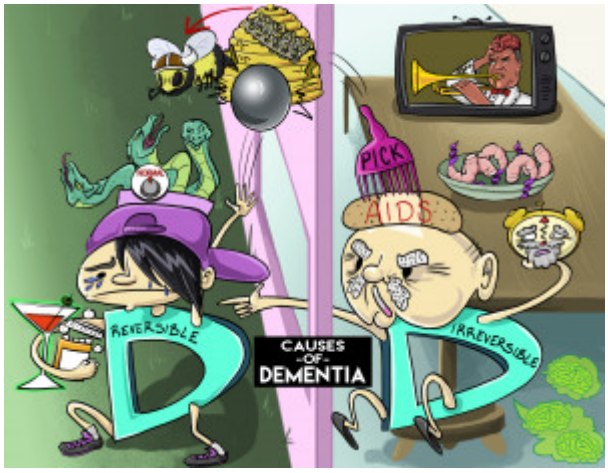
Causes of Dementia

Causes of dementia are often divided into reversible and irreversible. Reversible causes of dementia include vitamin B12 deficiency, metabolic disorders, normal pressure hydrocephalus, depression, intoxication and medications. Insidious causes which cannot be treated include Lewy body disease, prion disease, Pick's disease, AIDS dementia, Alzheimer's disease and multi-infarct (vascular) dementia.



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Reversible Causes

Intoxication or Medications

Intoxicating-alcohol and Med-bottle

Patients can become impaired due to alcohol or drug intoxication. Furthermore, many older patients take many medications, some of which can cause toxic side effects that may lead to dementia.

Depression

Depressed-emo

Depression can lead to dementia, and treatment of the underlying psychological state can lead to resolution of symptoms.

Normal Pressure Hydrocephalus

Normal Pressure Hydra-in-head

Normal pressure hydrocephalus is a disorder in which decreased CSF absorption leads to increased ventricular space in the brain. This cause of dementia is treatable with surgical placement of a shunt to drain excess fluid.

Vitamin B12 Deficiency

Viking (B) Bee (12) Dozen Broken

Vitamin B12 deficiency can lead to dementia. Correction of this deficiency will slowly lead to resolution of symptoms.

Metabolic Conditions

Metal-ball

Metabolic conditions, such as hypoglycemia and hypothyroidism are reversible causes of dementia. Correction of these metabolic states leads to resolution of symptoms.

Irreversible Causes

Lewy Body Dementia

Lewy-Armstrong

Lewy body dementia (LBD) is a progressive degenerative dementia primarily affecting older adults. Due to cytoplasmic inclusions in the brain, called Lewy bodies, patients develop irreversible dementia.

Prion Disease

Prawn Folded Protein

Prions cause neurodegenerative disease by forming plaques, known as amyloid, which disrupt the normal tissue structure. Diseases include Creutzfeldt-Jakob disease (CJD) and Kuru. The physical damage and clinical manifestations of such prion diseases are irreversible.

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Pick's Disease

Pick

Pick's disease is a form of progressive dementia, typically occurring in late middle age and often familial, involving frontal lobe atrophy of the brain. Patients develop behavioral changes and irreversible dementia.

AIDS Dementia

band-AID

When patient CD4+ counts get low, HIV-associated neurocognitive disorders (HAND) disorders may appear. These are associated with HIV infection and AIDS and are irreversible.

Alzheimer's Disease

Old-timer

Alzheimer's is an insidious neurodegenerative disorder that leads to "Alzheimer's dementia." This process can be treated, but the dementia is irreversible and cannot be cured.

Multi-infarct (Vascular) Dementia

Multiple-farts

Multi-infarct dementia, or vascular dementia, is a common form of dementia caused by an impaired supply of blood to the brain. This can occur via a series of small strokes, and the dementia observed is not reversible.

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