

Interventions

Neuroleptics

[Nerve-leopard](#)

Neuroleptics, such as haloperidol and risperidone, may be used to decrease the symptoms of Huntington's disease by blocking dopamine receptors and decreasing choreiform movements. However, these medications do not slow down disease progression.

Tetrabenazine

[Tetris-bonsai-tree](#)

Excessive levels of dopamine cause chorea in patients with Huntington's disease. Tetrabenazine decreases dopamine transmission in the brain to significantly moderate chorea.

Genetic Counseling

[Gene Counselor](#)

Since Huntington's disease is an autosomal dominant disorder, genetic counseling is recommended to confirm the presence of disease. A positive test indicates that a person will develop the disease but the timing and extent is unknown. DNA testing may be done on fetal cells retrieved by amniocentesis or chorionic villus sample. Since there is no cure for Huntington's disease, genetic counseling of expectant families is the only method of decreasing prevalence of the disease.

Considerations

Stages of Disease

[Stages of Hunters](#)

Huntington's disease is a progressive condition that is classified in stages. Each of the three stages lasts about 5 years. During stage 1, the patient may present with psychological and neurological deficits but is able to maintain independence. During stage 2, the patient may experience increased choreiform movements and will require assistance with ADLs. The majority of patients in stage 3 of Huntington's disease are completely dependent on others to perform ADLs.

High Calorie Diet

[High Pancakes](#)

Huntington's disease causes choreic movements that increase the patient's caloric requirements. In order to maintain body weight, the patient may need up to 5000 calories/day. As the disease progresses, maintaining nutritional requirements may necessitate a switch to pureed foods or thickened liquid diets since patients may have increased difficulty swallowing.