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## Tips For Understanding the Different Forms of Dementia

As those we love age, it is common for them to experience some forms of memory loss. When that time comes, we may think that what is going on is normal or may even consider going to the doctor to get some extra help. What many people do not think about, though, is that there is a complete umbrella of different types of dementias ranging from mild to severe and each has their own range of treatments and therapies. This is why it is important to talk to your doctor and see what you can do to help.

### Types of Dementia

- 1. Alzheimer's.** According to the Alzheimer's Association, Alzheimer's occurs when there is evidence of nerve cell damage and death around the brain caused by deposits of plaques and tangles. The most common symptoms are difficulty remembering people, conversations or events. Eventually this leads to confusion, behavioral changes and difficulty doing everyday activities. This is the most common form of dementia and is a progressive brain disease. The Alzheimer's Society states that there is no cure for Alzheimer's, but there are some drug treatments and non-drug options. Support is also widely available.
- 2. Vascular Dementia.** This form of dementia is known as "post-stroke dementia." This is known to be the second most common form of dementia. Vascular dementia includes symptoms such as memory loss, impaired judgement and a decrease of motivation. According to [Alzheimers.net](http://Alzheimers.net), this is caused by bleeding inside of the brain that causes brain damage because of a stroke. This is also an incurable form, however, to keep the injury from becoming worse, medicines and therapies will need to be used to manage symptoms.
- 3. Dementia with Lewy Bodies.** This form is caused by abnormal proteins that impair functioning by appearing in the nerve cells. This can cause sleep problems, hallucinations and cause rapid swings in how alert you are. Even though this is also an incurable form, therapies and treatments can help to decrease the symptoms.
- 4. Mixed Dementia.** This form is exactly what it sounds like. In this case, there is more than one cause of the dementia. Most commonly, the person may have all of the previous forms at once. This means that the person can have any or all symptoms of Alzheimer's, vascular dementia or dementia with Lewy Bodies. There are no medicines to treat mixed dementia, however, many doctors will prescribe medicines used to treat Alzheimer's.

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- 5. Frontotemporal Dementia.** This form of dementia occurs when there is damage or shrinkage in the frontal or temporal lobes of the brain. Though rare, this dementia mostly takes control over behavior or emotion rather than memory. Changes in apathy, empathy and inhibition can occur with this type of dementia. Anxiety and depression are also common symptoms as well as difficulty with language. Sadly, this form cannot be cured or reversed, only managed. Talk to a doctor about medicines that can help to treat problematic symptoms.
- 6. Rarer Types of Dementia.** Any time brain damage occurs, dementia can begin. Some diseases can cause dementia to be more prevalent, as well. These include Parkinson's disease, Huntington's disease, multiple sclerosis, HIV and even Wernicke-Korsakoff Syndrome – mostly caused by alcoholism. All of these are currently irreversible, but there are resources to provide some aid. For more information on the help that is available, visit the [Alzheimer's Society](#) website.

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Our mission at Lions Gate is to enrich the lives of those we serve through quality and compassionate care consistent with our heritage and values. We strive to provide [programs and services](#) that inspire wellness as well as social, cultural and spiritual independence.

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