

What is Vascular dementia?



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Vascular dementia is the second most common type of dementia. The illness is caused by an impairment in the brain's blood supply resulting in damage to brain nerve cells. For some people vascular dementia can develop suddenly after a stroke when there has been a sudden disruption of the brain's blood supply but for others it can develop and progress more gradually.

What symptoms may develop when a person has Vascular dementia?

Many of the symptoms of Vascular dementia are similar to those experienced in Alzheimer's disease however people with vascular dementia are more vulnerable to developing depression.

Who is at risk of developing Vascular dementia?

Those who:

- smoke
- have high blood pressure
- have diabetes or
- have high cholesterol

are at increased risk of developing Vascular dementia. Whilst treating these underlying conditions will have no effect on the brain cell damage that has already occurred, it may help to slow the progression of the illness. Medications used to treat Alzheimer's disease e.g. acetylcholinesterase inhibitors and memantine are not recommended in vascular dementia.

Additional sources of further information.

The **Alzheimer's Society** has a detailed factsheet on Vascular dementia and this can be accessed from the website www.alzheimers.org.uk or by contacting their local office.

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