

## Information Sheet

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# Parkinson's disease with dementia

### About the condition

Parkinson's dementia is a condition that some people can experience as their Parkinson's disease progresses. It affects thinking and memory and can have a big impact on different aspects of life.

Dementia symptoms are caused by a significant loss of brain function. There are different forms of the condition and each person will experience dementia in their own way.

There is a similar condition called dementia with Lewy bodies.

It's important to note that dementia-like symptoms can also be caused by other problems, like depression or the side effects of medication. If you are concerned, you should arrange an appointment with your GP or Parkinson's nurse, who will be able to help.

### Changes that might happen

People experience Parkinson's dementia in a variety of ways but in general, symptoms can include:

- memory problems, concentration and slower thought processes
- communication problems – for example, difficulties finding the right word or remembering names
- difficulties with decision making, planning activities or solving problems
- problems with everyday activities such as dressing, cooking and shopping
- changes in appetite, energy levels and sleeping patterns. This can affect motivation and interest in things previously enjoyed
- depression and anxiety – some people may find it difficult to control their emotions
- visual hallucinations and delusions – these can be managed with medication.

### Things to consider

If you, or someone you care for, has noticed any of these symptoms, it's a good idea to discuss it with your GP. Early diagnosis is crucially important in order to access the right medication and support, and to plan for the future. There is no cure for dementia, but the symptoms can be managed.

### Medication

After a diagnosis of Parkinson's dementia, the GP or Parkinson's nurse may review the Parkinson's medication, as some side effects may make dementia symptoms worse. Sometimes it is necessary to find a balance between controlling the Parkinson's and the dementia symptoms.

### Help from other professionals

There are other professionals who can help. The GP or Parkinson's nurse can refer patients to Physiotherapists, Speech and Language Therapists, Occupational Therapists (OT), Dieticians and Social Workers. They can also provide information about local services.

### Legal matters

If diagnosed with Parkinson's dementia, you, or the person you care for, may want to make some important decisions about the future, regarding finances and preferences on medical and social care. They may also want to choose someone to handle their affairs, and make this a legal agreement, such as a Power of Attorney.

### Caring for someone with Parkinson's dementia

Someone diagnosed with Parkinson's dementia may need support from family and friends with things like shopping, housework and cooking. In this case, the person with dementia will be entitled to receive Attendance Allowance or Personal Independent Payment (PIP), which will help provide some financial support.

If you, or someone else, is dedicating a lot of time providing support as an unpaid carer, you/they may be entitled to claim Carer's Allowance.

### Useful information

- **Parkinson's UK – Dementia and Parkinson's:**  
[www.parkinsons.org.uk/dementia](http://www.parkinsons.org.uk/dementia)
- **Parkinson's UK – Helpline:**  
Tel: 0808 800 0303  
Monday to Friday: 9am–7pm,  
Saturday: 10am–2pm (Closed Sundays/Bank Holidays)  
Email: [hello@parkinsons.org.uk](mailto:hello@parkinsons.org.uk)
- **Carers UK**  
[www.carersuk.org](http://www.carersuk.org)  
Tel: (Carers Scotland) 0141 378 1065  
Email: [advice@carersuk.org](mailto:advice@carersuk.org)