

Clinical Types of Dementia with Concomitant Mental Illnesses

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Annotation: Dementia is a term that describes several diseases that have a negative impact on memory, thinking and the ability to perform daily activities. Dementia progresses over time. It mainly affects older people, but not all people develop dementia as they age. Factors that increase the risk of developing dementia include:

Keywords: Dementia, cognitive functions, motivation, old age.

- age (dementia is more common among people aged 65 years and older);
- high blood pressure (hypertension);
- high blood sugar (diabetes);
- overweight or obesity;
- smoking;
- excessive alcohol consumption;
- lack of physical activity;
- social isolation;
- depression.

Dementia is a syndrome that can be caused by a variety of diseases that gradually destroy nerve cells and damage the brain, usually resulting in a decline in cognitive function (that is, the ability to process information mentally) to a greater extent than would otherwise be expected. as a result of normal biological aging processes. Although dementia does not affect consciousness, impairment of cognitive function is often accompanied, and sometimes preceded, by mood swings, deterioration in emotional control, and degradation of social behavior or motivation. Dementia has physical, psychological, social and economic consequences not only for people living with dementia, but also for their carers, their families and society as a whole. This is often accompanied by a lack of awareness and understanding of dementia, leading to stigma and making diagnosis and care difficult.

Relevance. Clinical picture Dementia has several successive stages of development. At the initial stages it often remains unrecognized. This is due to the fact that memory and thinking disorders are mild and are perceived by relatives and the patient himself as age-related changes.

Early dementia

The main symptoms of the early phase of dementia are:

- difficulties in learning, mastering new information or acquiring new skills;
- difficulty or impossibility of independently performing complex household tasks;
- lability (variability) of mood;
- periodic and short-term disturbances in orientation in familiar areas;
- deterioration of memory and thought processes.

Moderate dementia

At the next stage, the symptoms become more and more noticeable to others. Cognitive impairment progressively worsens, and forgetfulness appears regarding recent events and the names of people from the usual social circle. Aphasia is added - a variant of speech impairment, manifested by the inability to use the right words and express one's thoughts.

A patient with dementia has impaired orientation at home, which leads to difficulties in performing any household tasks. At the same time, he remains able to independently satisfy his basic physiological needs. Mood or behavioral disturbances worsen. Relatives begin to notice sudden mood swings, excessive suspicion, pickiness or grumpiness.

As the disease progresses, acute psychotic symptoms may develop. It can be represented by attacks of unmotivated aggression, various delusions, auditory or visual hallucinations.

Terminal stage

In the terminal stages of dementia, there is a gradual disintegration of personality. Late clinical manifestations include:

- loss of ability to self-care;
- inability to navigate the terrain, space and time;
- decreased motor activity;
- total aphasia;
- inability to recognize close friends and family members;
- impaired recognition of objects, sounds and phenomena;
- personality changes and psychotic disorders.

The inability to satisfy the physiological needs of the body and the loss of self-care skills leads to helplessness. A person with advanced dementia cannot be responsible for their actions and requires constant care.

There are several types of classification of senile dementia. The most common is based on the mechanism of development of the disease. The following types of pathology are distinguished:

- Alzheimer's (atrophic): based on a degenerative process in the cerebral cortex, most often found in Alzheimer's disease;
- cerebrovascular: occurs against the background of chronic insufficiency of blood supply;
- mixed.

The location of pathological foci is the basis of the second classification: cortical, subcortical, mixed and multifocal forms of dementia are distinguished.

Clinical manifestations allow us to distinguish two variants of the disease:

- lacunar dementia: mainly the intellectual sphere suffers, memory suffers, but the person is aware of himself and can assess his condition;
- total: loss of self-service skills and inadequate perception of reality.

Severity

There are three degrees of severity of pathology:

- mild: there is a decrease in short-term memory, emotional instability, inability to remember new things; the person can take care of himself independently and understands the need for treatment;

- moderate: self-care becomes difficult; a person begins to forget about basic actions (close the door, turn off the gas), and may get lost on the way to the store; already at this stage the patient requires constant monitoring;
- severe: complete loss of the ability to self-care and critical perception of reality, the need for constant care.

Symptoms

The main symptoms of dementia occur in all forms and types of the disease. They include:

- decreased short-term memory;
- difficulty in perceiving new information, learning new skills (for example, working with a computer or smartphone);
- viscosity of thinking: the patient takes a long time to think, he needs more time to solve any problems or issues;
- speech difficulties: slurred pronunciation, difficulty finding words;
- impaired coordination of movements, especially fine motor skills;
- uncertainty, unsteadiness of gait;
- inappropriate behavior: patients become overly sweet or, conversely, aggressive;
- disorientation in space and time.

Different types of dementia have their own characteristic symptoms. For example, the Alzheimer's type is manifested mainly by mental and memory disorders, changes in thinking, and inappropriate behavior. The vascular form of the disease is characterized by both intellectual and motor impairments, and dementia with Lewy bodies often takes on the character of a psychiatric pathology and is accompanied by hallucinations, delusions, insomnia and depression.

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