

Medical causes of memory problems

Al's story:

Al didn't know what was happening. He was having a hard time remembering things. He wasn't eating well and couldn't seem to get interested in seeing friends, or taking his usual walk around the neighborhood. He was confused and irritable. He wasn't sleeping well at night. His wife was so worried that she took him to the doctor. It turned out that Al was having a bad reaction to one of his medicines. Once his doctor changed the medicine, Al felt more like his old self.

What causes serious memory problems?

Medical conditions

Certain medical conditions can cause memory problems, but these problems usually go away with treatment. Here is a list of things that can cause memory problems:

- Bad reaction to certain medicines
- Depression
- Not having enough fluids in your body, also called dehydration
- Not eating enough healthy foods, or too few vitamins and minerals in your body
- Head injuries
- Thyroid problems

These medical conditions are serious and should be treated by a doctor.

Sam's story:

Sam feels good for a guy his age. He's an active 70 year old. So, he couldn't believe it when, all of a sudden, he couldn't remember what somebody told him 5 minutes ago.

Vascular (or multi-infarct) dementia

Sam went for a check-up. The doctor told him that his forgetfulness was caused by small strokes. These strokes had damaged some of his brain cells. She said his problem was called vascular dementia (also called multi-infarct dementia). She said that she couldn't cure his memory problems, but that she would give him medicine to lower his high blood pressure. This medicine also would help lower his chances of having more strokes.

Sam wasn't happy to find out that his doctor couldn't fix everything. Even so, he agreed to take his medication. At least then he'd be doing something to keep from having more strokes.

Many people have never heard of vascular dementia. Like Alzheimer's disease, it is a medical condition that causes serious memory problems. Unlike Alzheimer's disease, signs of vascular dementia may appear suddenly. This is because the memory loss and confusion

are caused by small strokes, or changes in the blood supply, to parts of the brain. If the strokes stop, you can get better, or stay the same for a long time. Having more strokes can cause the dementia to worsen. Taking care of high blood pressure can lower one's chances of getting this illness.

Emotional problems

Some emotional problems in older people can cause serious memory problems. Feeling sad, lonely, worried, or bored can cause confusion or forgetfulness. Being active, spending more time with family and friends, and learning new skills can help, but you may need to see a doctor or counselor for treatment for some emotional disorders. Once you get help, your memory problems should get better.

Alzheimer's disease

Alzheimer's disease also causes serious memory problems. The signs of Alzheimer's disease begin slowly and get worse over time. This is because nerve cell changes in the brain cause large numbers of brain cells to die. It may look like simple forgetfulness at first, but over time people with Alzheimer's disease have trouble thinking clearly. They find it hard to do everyday things like shopping, driving, cooking, and having a con-

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Quotes to remember

"Human memory is a marvelous, but fallacious instrument... The memories which lie within us are not carved in stone; not only do they tend to become erased as the years go by, but often they change, or even increase by incorporating extraneous features."

Primo Levi (1919–1987) Italian author and Auschwitz death camp survivor.



"The secret of success is to know something nobody else knows."

- Aristotle Onassis



"Men might as well project a voyage to the moon as attempt to employ steam navigation against the stormy north Atlantic Ocean."

- a rare two-for-one bad prediction from astronomer Dionysius Lardner, 1838.

"[It is] physically impossible for a pilot to withstand a speed much over 400 miles per hour."

- aeronautical engineer Dr. Starr Truscott, 1929.



From the book **Bad Predictions** by Laura Lee



"...For that's the way it is with life, as some of the most beautiful days come completely by chance. But even the most beautiful days eventually have their sunsets."

- Author Unknown



Medical causes of memory problems (continued from page 1)

versation. As the illness progresses, people with Alzheimer's disease may need someone to take care of all their needs, (feeding, bathing, etc.) at home or in a nursing home.

If a person is in the early or middle stages of Alzheimer's disease, taking medications can help. Some medicines keep symptoms, such as memory loss, from getting worse for a time. Medications also can help if a person is worried, depressed, or are having problems sleeping. ■



Totally Useless Trivia

In the early fifteenth century, scholars in China compiled an encyclopedia consisting of 11,095 volumes.

John Tyler had more children than any other American president. He had eight sons and seven daughters and was married twice.

The first graves in Arlington National Cemetery

Mayflies, after hatching and then spending one to three years developing as naiads, live less than one day as adults. The lifetime of mayflies usually begins in late afternoon. During this single day, they molt twice, mate, and lay eggs in water. Because these adults do not have developed mouth parts, they do not feed. They die before dawn.



Meryl Streep won the Best Supporting Actress Oscar, Golden Globe, and New York Film Critics award for her poignant portrayal of Joanna Kramer in the film "Kramer vs Kramer" (1979). However, the role of the deserting mother was originally intended for **Kate Jackson**, a hot property at the time due to the success of TV's The Rookies and Charlie's Angels. Jackson turned down the part.



were dug by James Parks, a former Arlington Estate slave. Buried in Section 15, Parks is the only person buried in Arlington National Cemetery who was born on the property.

Celery has negative calories — it takes more calories to eat a piece of celery than the celery has in it to begin with.

Only sixteen Concorde were ever built, the last in 1980. On New Year's Eve 1994, one Concorde plane carried wealthy revelers on a 32-hour trip to nowhere. These travelers, who paid \$23,000 apiece for the trip, rang in the New Year twice because they twice crossed the International Date Line.



About Gout

What Is Gout?

Gout is one of the most painful forms of arthritis. It occurs when too much uric acid builds up in the body. The buildup of uric acid can lead to sharp uric acid crystal deposits in joints, often in the big toe. Deposits of uric acid (called tophi) look like lumps under the skin. In addition, kidney stones can form from uric acid crystals in the kidneys. For many people, the first attack of gout occurs in

the big toe. Often, the attack wakes a person from sleep. The toe is very sore, red, warm, and swollen.

Gout can cause pain swelling, redness, heat, and stiffness in joints. In addition to the big toe, gout can affect the:

- Insteps
- Ankles
- Heels
- Knees
- Wrists

- Fingers
- Elbows.

A gout attack can be brought on by stressful events, alcohol, drugs, or another illness. Acute attacks usually get better within 3 to 10 days, even without treatment. The next attack may not occur for months or even years. Uric acid comes from the breakdown of substances called purines. Purines are found in all of your

About Gout (continued)

body's tissues. They are also in many foods, such as liver, dried beans and peas, and anchovies.

Normally, uric acid dissolves in the blood. It passes through the kidneys and out of the body in urine. But uric acid can build up in the blood when the body increases the amount of uric acid it makes, and the kidneys do not get rid of enough uric acid. It can also increase when a person eats too many foods high in purines. When uric acid levels in the blood are high, it is called hyperuricemia. Most people with hyperuricemia do not develop gout. But if excess uric acid crystals form in the body, gout can develop.

You are more likely to have gout if you: have family members with the disease, are a man, are overweight, drink too much alcohol, eat too many foods rich in purines, have an enzyme defect that makes it hard for the body to break down purines, are exposed to lead in the environment, have had an organ transplant, use

some medicines such as diuretics, aspirin, cyclosporine, or levodopa, or take the vitamin niacin.

How Is Gout Diagnosed? Your doctor will ask about your symptoms, medical history, and family history of gout. Signs and symptoms of gout include: hyperuricemia; uric acid crystals in joint fluid, more than one attack of acute arthritis, arthritis that develops in 1 day producing a swollen, red, and warm joint; attack of arthritis in only one joint, usually the toe, ankle, or knee. To confirm a diagnosis of gout, your doctor may draw a sample of fluid from an inflamed joint to look for crystals associated with gout.

How Is Gout Treated? Doctors use medicines to treat an acute attack of gout, including: non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs (NSAIDs) and corticosteroids, such as prednisone or colchicine, which works best when taken within the first 12 hours of an acute attack. Sometimes doctors prescribe NSAIDs or colchicine in small daily doses to pre-

vent future attacks.

There are also medicines that lower the level of uric acid in the blood.

What Can People With Gout Do to Stay Healthy?

Some things that you can do to stay healthy are: take the medicines your doctor prescribes as directed, and tell your doctor about all the medicines and vitamins you take. Plan follow-up visits with your doctor, and maintain a healthy, balanced diet. Avoid foods that are high in purines, drink plenty of water, exercise regularly, and maintain a healthy body weight. Ask your doctor about how to lose weight safely. Fast or extreme weight loss can increase uric acid levels in the blood. ■

"When I'm working on a problem, I never think about beauty. I think only how to solve the problem. But when I have finished, if the solution is not beautiful, I know it is wrong."

- Richard Buckminster Fuller

How Do You Make a Cultured Pearl?

Sing to an oyster?
No - irritate an oyster!
About 4,000 years ago the Chinese discovered pearls in oysters. The inside of an oyster's shell is covered with a smooth shiny coating called mother-of-pearl. When an irritant, such as a grain of sand, gets caught inside the oyster's shell it secretes layers of mother-of-pearl to protect its body by coating the irritant. The coated grain of sand becomes a pearl. Man can force the oyster to produce a pearl by insert-

ing an irritant into the shell. It takes the oyster two to three years to produce a good size pearl. Cultured pearls are usually not perfect, but the Japanese have discovered that if you surgically insert an irritant directly into the body of the oyster this will produce a perfect pearl.

Historically, pearl divers dove up to 80 feet with equipment no more sophisticated than nose clips. The divers could stay under water for

about a minute and they scooped up the shells with their hands and put them in tubs that would float to the surface. The largest pearl ever found is reported to be four inches around and two inches long. ■

"Better by far you should forget and smile than that you should remember and be sad."

- Christina Georgina Rossetti

Interesting Fact

Two theories predominate in the debates that rage on as to why a mere 4% of the population is left-handed. Most authorities agree, to the relief of many a mother of a left-handed child, that if the child prefers using the left hand, and functions well with it, there is no need to "correct this condition." One theory centers on the two halves of the brain, i.e., the left half and the right half, each of which functions differently. Medical science believes that the left half of the brain predominates over the right half. The stem of this theory is that nerves from the brain cross over at neck-level to the opposite side of the body, and nerves from the other side of the brain reciprocate. The end result is that the opposite sides of the body are supplied by the opposite sides of the brain. The predominant left half of the brain, which graciously supplies the right half of the body, theoretically renders it more skillful in reading, writing, speaking, and working, and makes most people right-handed. "Lefties," however, are the product of an inversion, whereas the right half of the brain predominates, and they work best with the left side of their bodies. Theory number two trickles down to the asymmetrical nature of the body. Examples of the asymmetry, which flows from head to toe, are that the right side of our faces differs slightly from the left, that our legs differ in strength, or that our feet differ in size. One aspect of this asymmetry is that for most people the right hand is stronger than the left. There is no doubt that we exist in a "right-handed society," a society that manufactures most basics, including scissors, doorknobs, locks, screwdrivers, automobiles, buttons on clothing, and musical instruments for the 96%. Left-handed people compensate for this snobbery of sorts, by being members of an elite society which includes many of the world's greatest geniuses, including Michelangelo and Leonardo da Vinci.



"Bruno here is like a motivational speaker. Whenever you start to slack off, he'll slap you."

TOP ANTIOXIDANT FOODS

[Oxygen Radical Absorbance Capacity (ORAC) units per 100 grams**]

FRUITS

Prunes 5,770
Raisins 2,830
Blueberries 2,400
Blackberries 2,036
Strawberries 1,540
Raspberries 1,220
Plums 949
Oranges 750
Grapes, red 739
Cherries 670




VEGETABLES

Kale 1,770
Spinach 1,260
Brussels sprouts 980
Alfalfa sprouts 930
Broccoli florets 890
Beets 840
Red bell pepper 710
Onion 450
Corn 400
Eggplant 390




** About 3.5 ounce




Light as a feather, there is nothing in it, yet the strongest man can't hold it for much more than a minute?

Answer, bottom of page 2



"Well, that explains the satellite bill we've been getting each month."



The Name Sounds Familiar

Antoinette Perry, the only child of an affluent Denver attorney, was born June 27, 1888. As a small girl, she studied piano and voice, and was sent to New York's exclusive Miss Ely's School to prepare for a concert career. Her heart, however, was always in the theatre. In 1905, at the age of 16, she made her stage debut in Chicago in a play called "Mrs. Templeton's Telegram." By age 20, Perry had already become a stage star. Over the course of her lifetime, Perry became not only a noted actress, but also a director and philanthropist. She became active in the American Theatre Wing, helping to form the American Theater Wing


War Service, which held benefits to raise money for the British war effort. When she died at age 58, the members of the American Theatre Wing were determined that some type of memorial be established to honor her. They decided on a series of annual awards for distinguished acting and technical achievement. They named them the Tony Awards.




From the book **The Name's Familiar** by Laura Lee

"We had a quicksand box in our backyard. I was an only child, eventually."
- Steven Wright

"It's just a job. Grass grows, birds fly, waves pound the sand. I beat people up."
- Muhammad Ali



"The good news is these security officers won't beat you unmercifully while they're escorting you off the premises."




Advice for Today

BACK PAIN. One of the best things you can do to prevent back pain is to exercise regularly and keep your back muscles strong. Exercises that increase balance and strength can decrease your risk of falling and injuring your back or breaking bones. Exercises such as Tai Chi and yoga – or any weight-bearing exercise that challenges your balance – are good ones to try.

Eating a healthy diet also is important. For one thing, eating to maintain a healthy weight – or to lose weight, if you are overweight – helps you avoid putting unnecessary and injury-causing stress and strain on your back. To keep your spine strong, as with all bones, you need to get enough calcium and vitamin D every day. These nutrients help prevent osteoporosis, which is responsible for a lot of the bone fractures that lead to back pain. Calcium is found in dairy products, green, leafy vegetables, and fortified products like orange juice. Your skin makes vitamin D when you are in the sun. If you are not outside much, you can obtain vitamin D from your diet: almost all milk and some other foods are fortified with this nutrient. Most adults don't get enough

calcium and vitamin D, so talk to your doctor about how much you need per day, and consider taking a nutritional supplement, or a multivitamin. Practicing good posture, supporting your back properly, and avoiding heavy lifting when you can may all help you prevent injury. If you do lift something heavy, keep your back straight. Don't bend over the item; instead, lift it by putting the stress on your legs and hips.



When Should I See a Doctor for Pain?

In most cases, it is not necessary to see a doctor for back pain, because pain usually goes away with or without treatment. However, a trip to the doctor is probably a good idea if you have numbness or tingling, if your pain is severe and doesn't improve with over the counter medications and rest, or if you have pain after a fall or an injury. It is also important to see your doctor if you have pain along with any of the following problems: trouble urinating, weakness, pain, or numbness in your legs, fever, or unintentional weight loss. Such symptoms could signal a serious problem that requires treatment soon.

Which Type of Doctor Should I See?

Many different types of doctors treat back pain, from family physicians to doctors who specialize in disorders of the nerves and musculoskeletal system. In most cases, it is best to see your primary care physician first. In many cases, he or she can treat the problem. In other cases, your doctor may refer you to an appropriate specialist.

How Is The Cause of Back Pain Diagnosed?

Diagnosing the cause of back pain requires a medical history and a physical exam. If necessary, your doctor may also order medical tests, which may include X-rays.

What Is the Difference Between Acute and Chronic Pain?

Pain that hits you suddenly – after falling from a ladder, being tackled on the football field, or lifting a load that is just too heavy, for example – is acute pain. Acute pain comes on quickly and often leaves just as quickly. To be classified as acute, pain should last no longer than 6 weeks. Acute pain is the most common type of back pain. Chronic pain, on the other hand, may come on either quickly or slowly, and it lingers a long time. In general, pain that lasts more than 3 months is considered chronic. Chronic pain is much less common than acute pain.

How Is Back Pain Treated?

Treatment for back pain generally depends on what kind of pain you experience: acute or chronic.

Acute Back Pain

Acute back pain usually gets better on its own, and without treatment, although you may want to try acetaminophen, aspirin, or ibuprofen to help ease the pain. Perhaps the best advice is to go about your usual activities as much as you can with the assurance that the problem will clear up. Getting up and moving around can help ease stiffness, relieve pain, and have you back doing your regular activities sooner. *Exercises are not usually advisable for acute back pain, nor is surgery.*

Chronic Back Pain

Treatment for chronic back pain falls into two basic categories: the kind that requires an operation and the kind that does not. In the vast majority of cases, back pain does not require surgery. Doctors will almost always try nonsurgical treatments before recommending surgery. In a very small percentage of cases – when back pain is caused by a tumor, an infection, or a nerve root problem called cauda equina syndrome, for example – prompt surgery may be necessary to ease the pain and prevent further problems.



PREADVISE

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PREADVISE Update - More than 7300 SELECT men have now chosen to be part of PREADVISE. We want to ensure each of you that the recent decision by SELECT to withdraw the study supplements in no way affects our desire to have you continue your participation in PREADVISE, and does not diminish the importance of your participation . Your SELECT site staff looks forward to seeing you at your next visit.

**Solve this puzzle:
What is the missing number?**

1	7	8	4	12	16
1	5	4	2	6	8
0	?	4	2	6	8

Answer on bottom of page 2

Vocabulary Builder

pettifoggery

Pronunciation: /PET-i-fog-r-ee/

n : little mindedness : bureaucratic absorption with silly details

"To tell the members of the federal judiciary that they cannot get a raise even sufficient to cope with inflation is pettifoggery of an ignoble sort

tatterdemalion

Pronunciation: /tat-er-di-MAYL-yon/

adj *1: ragged or disreputable in appearance 2: being in a decayed condition : dilapidated

*Ill equipped and ragtag, the tatterdemalion volunteers showed no hope of ever becoming a real fighting army

meretricious

Pronunciation: /mer-e-TRISH-us/

adj : showy or gaudy

"Although attractive from a distance, her jewels were overwhelming and meretricious up close."



Fold in half, staple, and place
mailing label here