

Managing various physical and health needs of the cared for:

Osteoporosis means that there is a loss in bone material. The bones become less dense and more 'honeycombed'. This makes people more prone to a break (fracture). Osteoporosis mainly affects older people.

Osteoarthritis causes pain and stiffness in joints. Symptoms may be helped by exercises, some physical devices and treatments, and losing weight if overweight. Arthritis means inflammation of the joints.

Osteoarthritis mainly affects the joint cartilage and the bone tissue next to the cartilage. Factors that influence osteoarthritis include: age, inherited tendency, obesity and ethnic origin.

Symptoms and problems	What to do?
<p>Osteoporosis usually develops slowly over several years without any symptoms. After a certain amount of bone loss, the following may occur:</p> <p>A bone fracture after a minor injury such as a fall most commonly the hip, wrist, and spine. About half the people who have a hip fracture are unable to live independently afterwards.</p> <p>Loss of height, persistent back pain and a stooping (bent forward) posture These symptoms occur if you develop one or more fractured vertebrae which become 'squashed' with the weight of the body.</p>	<p>Encourage exercise</p> <p>Calcium and vitamin D tablets These dietary supplements are commonly prescribed in addition to one of the above drugs. The body needs plenty of calcium and vitamin D to make bone.</p> <p>Drinking a pint of milk a day. Eat hard cheese such as Cheddar or Edam, or one pot of yoghurt. Eat fish, sardines, salmon, mackerel and tuna. Vitamin D is also made by the body after exposure to the sun. For most people over 65, an adequate amount of vitamin D can only be achieved by taking vitamin D supplements.</p> <p>Reduce smoking and cut down alcohol.</p> <p>Preventing falls- This can reduce your risk of breaking a bone. Check home for hazards such as uneven rugs, trailing wires, slippery floors, etc. Beware of going out in icy weather. Poor fitting slippers.</p> <p>Regular weight bearing exercise may help to prevent falls.</p>

	<p>Falls risk assessment</p> <p>Are vision and hearing as good as possible? Do they need checking? Are glasses or a hearing aid needed? Is lighting good at home?</p> <p>Drowsiness from drugs? Water tablet urgency?</p>
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Motor Neurone Disease (MND) causes a progressive weakness of many of the muscles in the body as a result of motor nerves becoming damaged and eventually they stop working. The muscles that the damaged nerves supply gradually become weak and stiff.

There is no cure for MND, but treatments can help to ease symptoms and disability. Symptoms tend to start in the hands and feet.

Symptoms and problems	What to do?
<p>Muscle weakness, which gradually becomes worse. The first symptoms commonly develop in the hands and arms (hard to get a grip and loosen jar tops), or feet and legs (drag one leg or trip). Less commonly, the first symptoms are in the muscles around the face and throat (may not shout or sing, slurred speech and change in voice quality).</p> <p>Other symptoms that may occur include: muscle cramps, tiredness and regular 'twitching' of weakened muscles jerking of an arm or leg whilst resting.</p>	<p>Medication - can modify the disease process a little.</p> <p>Medicines can ease some of the symptoms that may develop. For example: Painful cramps can be eased by medication.</p> <p>Excessive fatigue may be eased by medication.</p> <p>Stiff muscles may be eased by muscle relaxants.</p> <p>Excessive saliva that is difficult to swallow can be reduced by medicines.</p> <p>Provide tissues.</p> <p>Constipation is a common problem that can be eased with diet and laxatives.</p> <p>Vitamin E may have a modest effect on disease progression.</p> <p>Use appropriate communication tools, pen & pad, picture and alphabet board.</p> <p>Dietary advice is often needed when feeding and swallowing become difficult.</p> <p>Encourage appropriate diet and fluids.</p> <p>Encourage exercise either passive or</p>

	<p>active.</p> <p>Physiotherapy can help to maximise mobility. This includes: providing splints, collars, and other supports to help with posture. Also, to help prevent joints from becoming stiff and mobility aids when they become necessary.</p> <p>Occupational therapy provides advice and aids on activities of daily living.</p> <p>Speech therapy and various communication aids can help to communicate when speech becomes difficult.</p>
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Parkinson's Disease usually has symptoms of stiffness, shaking (tremor), and slowness of movement.

Parkinson's disease is a chronic (persistent) disorder of part of the brain. It mainly affects the way the brain co-ordinates the movements of the muscles in various parts of the body. There is no cure and no treatment to prevent the disease, although it does ease the symptoms.

Symptoms and problems	What helps Parkinson's disease?
<p>Slowness of movement. For example, it may become more of an effort to walk or to get up out of a chair. In time, a typical walking pattern often develops. This is a 'shuffling' walk with some difficulty in starting, stopping, and turning easily.</p> <p>Stiffness of muscles (rigidity) and muscles may feel tenses. Due to the stiffness, it may become difficult to do everyday tasks such as tying laces or buttoning shirts. The arms do not tend to swing as much when walking.</p> <p>Shaking (tremor) is common, but does not always occur. It typically affects the fingers, thumbs, hands, and arms, but can affect other parts of the body. It is most noticeable when resting. It may become worse when anxious or emotional. It tends to become less when using the hand to do something such as picking up an object.</p>	<p>Drugs ease symptoms when they become troublesome.</p> <p>Ensure medication is taken on time every day.</p> <p>Therapies such as physiotherapy (advise on posture, walking, and exercises), occupational therapy (advise on such things as home adaptations which may ease many tasks), speech therapy (help with swallowing and speech) may also be useful as the disease progresses.</p> <p>Encourage Cared for to do things even though they may be slower.</p> <p>Surgery may be an option for severe cases</p> <p>The advice of a dietician and other therapists may be needed in some cases.</p> <p>Reduce the chance of Constipation by having lots to drink, and eat plenty of vegetables, fruit, and foods high in fibre.</p> <p>Depression is common and can cause symptoms, which may seem as if the disease is getting worse (such as lack</p>

<p>Some other symptoms may develop due to problems with the way affected brain cells and nerves control the muscles. These include: Less facial expressions such as smiling or frowning. Difficulty with writing (handwriting tends to become smaller). Difficulty with balance and posture. Speech may become slow and monotonous. Swallowing may become troublesome, and saliva may pool in the mouth. Tiredness, and aches and pains.</p> <p>Various other symptoms develop in some cases, mainly as the condition becomes worse. These include: Constipation. Bladder symptoms and sometimes incontinence. Hallucinations (seeing things that are not real). Sweating. Sexual difficulties. Alterations in sense of smell. Difficulties with sleeping. Depression and anxiety.</p>	<p>of energy and becoming slower). If the condition gets worse quite quickly, over a few weeks, depression may be the cause.</p> <p>Some practical tips, for example: it is easier to get up from a high chair than from a low couch; consider using Velcro fasteners instead of buttons; carrying a walking stick when out may increase confidence if unsteadiness is a problem.</p>
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Memory Loss and Dementia is not a normal part of ageing process. Although an under-active thyroid can also cause memory problems. Dementia is the most serious form of any memory problem. It causes changes in personality, a decline in social function and the ability to look after oneself.

Symptoms of dementia develop gradually and become worse over a number of years. The most important part of treatment for dementia is good quality support for both the person with dementia, and for their carers.

Symptoms and problems	What to do?
<p>Memory loss. The most recent events are the first forgotten. It is common to misplace objects. However, events of the past are often remembered well until the dementia is severe. As things progress, sometimes memory loss for recent events is severe and the person may appear to be 'living in the past'. They may think of themselves as young and not recognise their true age.</p> <p>Disorientation. New surroundings and new people may confuse a person with dementia. However, in familiar places, and with old routines, the person may function well. Losing track of time is also typical. For example, not knowing if it is morning or afternoon, or what day it is.</p> <p>Poor concentration. Not being able to settle to anything.</p>	<p>There is no medicine that will reverse dementia although it will slow the progress down. Support and care is the most important part of treatment. Often the main Carer is a family member. It is important that Carers get the full support and advice, which is locally available. District nurses, GP, Community psychiatric nurses, specialist psychiatric assessment, Social Services and Voluntary organisations.</p> <p>The level of care and support needed often changes in time. For example, some people with mild dementia can cope well in their own familiar home. Some may live with a family member who does most of the caring. If things become worse, a place in a residential or nursing home may be best. Many Carers struggle on beyond the point that is appropriate.</p> <p>Reality orientation is thought to help in some cases. This involves giving regular information to people with</p>

<p>Personality changes. At first, family or friends may notice being easily irritable or moody. In some cases, over time, a person with dementia can do things quite out of character. This is often difficult for families and friends to cope with.</p> <p>Self-care. Without help, some people may not pay much attention to personal hygiene. They may forget to wash or change their clothes.</p> <p>Mood. Some people with early dementia recognise that they are failing and become depressed. However, many people with dementia are not aware that they are ill. They may remain cheerful. The distress is often felt more by relatives who may find it difficult to cope.</p> <p>Severe dementia. Speech may be lost. Severe physical problems may develop in the later stages of dementia. Such as immobility, incontinence, and general frailty.</p>	<p>dementia about times, places, or people to keep them 'orientated'. It may range from simple things such as having a board in a prominent place giving details of the day, date, season etc, to staff in a residential home 're-orienting' a person with dementia at each contact.</p> <p>'Stimulating the brain', for example, by recreational activities, problem-solving activities, and talking to the affected person. If possible, including some regular physical activity such as walking, dancing, etc, may help to slow down the decline in mobility that is common in people with dementia.</p> <p>Caring for a person with dementia can be a devastating task. That person may be a parent or spouse who has been known and respected in much kinder days and it is heart rending to see the deterioration. In the later stages especially there may be physical problems including the indignity of incontinence. The person may seem most ungrateful and even aggressive and this can be hurtful for the Carer.</p> <p>Change in personality - The person may become rude and aggressive. This can be very hurtful to those who are simply doing their best to help. Outburst of violence against Carers can happen it's important to remember that it is the disease.</p>
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Depression is common as it results from a chemical imbalance in the brain. This is why antidepressants work in treating depression.

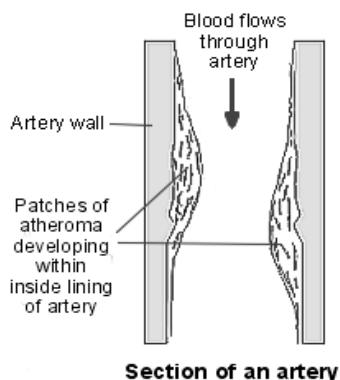
Symptoms can affect day-to-day life and can become very distressing. Some people have recurring episodes of depression and require long-term treatment to keep symptoms away. Symptoms may include... low mood for at least two weeks which can interfere with day-to-day activities.

Symptoms and problems	What helps depression?
<p>The following is a list of common symptoms of depression.</p> <p>Low mood for most of the day, nearly every day. Things always seem 'black'.</p> <p>Loss of enjoyment and interest in life, even for activities that are normally enjoyed.</p> <p>Abnormal sadness, often with weepiness.</p> <p>Feelings of guilt, worthlessness or uselessness.</p> <p>Poor motivation. Even simple tasks seem difficult.</p> <p>Poor concentration. It may be difficult to read, work, etc.</p> <p>Sleeping problems.</p> <p>Lacking in energy always tired.</p> <p>Difficulty with affection including going off sex.</p>	<p>Depression is one of the most common illnesses that GPs deal with. People with depression may be told by others to 'pull their socks up' or 'snap out of it'. The truth is, they cannot, and such comments by others are very unhelpful.</p> <p>'Bottling up' symptoms from friends and relatives are not advisable. Be open about feelings with close family and friends it may help them to understand and help.</p> <p>Talk and listen</p> <p>Do activities that do not require much concentration i.e. Radio or TV.</p> <p>Eat regularly.</p> <p>Reduced alcohol intake.</p> <p>Getting back into the hurly-burly of normal life may help the healing process when things are improving. Each person is different and the ability to work will vary.</p> <p>Sometimes a specific psychological problem can cause depression, counselling may be available for such problems.</p>

<p>Poor appetite and weight loss. Sometimes the reverse happens with comfort eating and weight gain.</p> <p>Irritability, agitation or restlessness.</p> <p>Symptoms often seem worse first thing each day.</p> <p>Physical symptoms such as headaches, palpitations, chest pains and general aches.</p> <p>A preoccupation with death and dying.</p>	<p>Exercise preferably daily.</p>
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You are invited to add your information here:

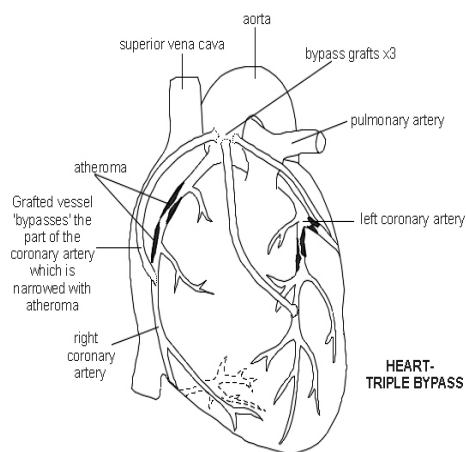
Preventing Cardiovascular Diseases: Including Heart Disease, Stroke, TIA & Peripheral Vascular Disease



The root cause of most cases of cardiovascular disease is a build-up of atheroma – (a fatty deposit within the inside lining of arteries). Cardiovascular diseases are diseases of the heart (cardiac muscle) or blood vessels. However, in practice, when doctors use the term 'cardiovascular disease' they usually mean diseases of the heart or blood vessels that are caused by atheroma.

Heart disease is a term used for conditions caused by narrowing of one or more of the coronary (heart) arteries by atheroma. The problems this can cause include: angina, heart attack, and heart failure.

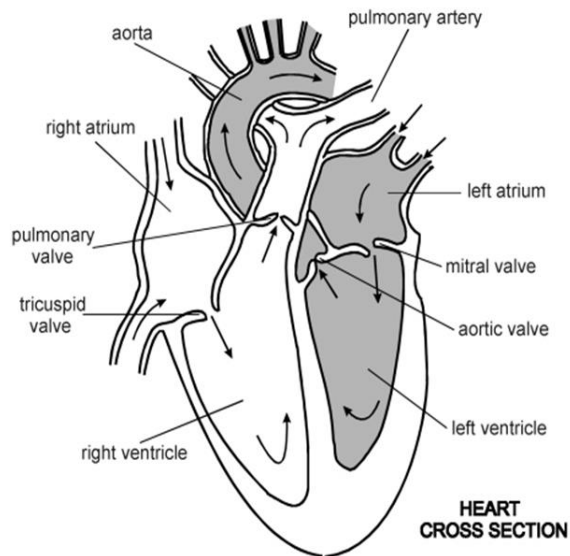
Cerebrovascular disease - stroke and TIA means a disease of the arteries in the brain. The problems this can cause include a stroke and a TIA (transient ischaemic attack). A stroke means that part of the brain is suddenly damaged. The common cause of a stroke is due to an artery in the brain, which becomes blocked by a blood clot. The blood clot usually forms over some atheroma. A TIA is a disorder caused by temporary lack of blood supply to a part of the brain.



Peripheral vascular disease is narrowing due to atheroma that affects arteries other than arteries in the heart or brain. The arteries that take blood to the legs are the most commonly affected.

Symptoms and problems	What helps Cardiovascular Disease?
<p>If a risk factor is present extra effort needs to be taken to tackle any lifestyle risk factors that can be changed.</p> <p>Risk factors are: smoking, obesity, poor diet, high intake of salt, stress, family history of heart disease.</p>	<p>Encourage a healthy diet.</p> <p>Encourage exercise.</p> <p>Reduce or stop smoking</p> <p>Ensure medication is taken.</p>

Heart Failure can be caused by various heart conditions. In heart failure the heart cannot cope with pumping the full amount of blood in each heartbeat. Heart failure means that the heart is not functioning as well as it should to pump blood around the body. Symptoms include... fluid retention, breathlessness and tiredness. Medication can ease symptoms and improve the outlook.



Symptoms and problems	What helps Cardiovascular Disease?
<p>Symptoms are mainly due to an accumulation of fluid in the lungs and body. This fluid retention mainly occurs, as the heart does not pump blood around the body as well as it should. Symptoms include: Breathlessness (short of breath), fluid retention, tiredness can be very variable and can occur even in mild cases.</p> <p>Depending on the underlying cause for the heart failure, there may be other symptoms: chest pains or angina, palpitations if there is a heart rhythm problem.</p>	<p>Encourage a healthy diet with reduced salt intake.</p> <p>Stop smoking.</p> <p>Encourage exercise.</p> <p>Have annual flu jab.</p> <p>Weigh each morning to see if fluid is being retained (retained fluid will rapidly increase weight).</p> <p>Watch for breathlessness.</p> <p>Discouraged alcohol.</p> <p>Ensure medication is taken.</p>

This information on illness and diseases is evidence based and taken from:

www.patient.co.uk