

認知障礙症(失智症) 晚期

認知障礙症(失智症)晚期的患者會變得越來越虛弱。本須知單介紹了認知障礙症(失智症)晚期可能會碰到的情況，並指出一些值得考慮的重要事項。

認知障礙症(失智症)患者能力發生改變的速度各不相同。但由於認知障礙症(失智症)是一種漸進性疾病，患者的能力會逐步減退。大多數認知障礙症(失智症)晚期患者需要全面照護，通常需要在養老院接受這種照護服務。在有些情況下，一些家庭和照顧者選擇在家裡照顧患者。

認知障礙症(失智症)晚期會出現什麼情況？

漸進性失憶

因為認知障礙症(失智症)患者可能無法認出自己的親人，對於家人和照顧者來講，這可能是特別令人感到困擾。

體能日漸減退

大多數認知障礙症(失智症)患者會逐漸失去行走、洗浴、穿衣和自己吃東西的能力。他們還可能受到中風或關節炎等其他疾病的影響。患者最終將臥病在床或者需要使用輪椅。

溝通

認知障礙症(失智症)患者會覺得越來越難以理解別人說的話或周圍發生的事情。他們可能會逐漸失去言語能力，或者只會重複幾個詞，甚至有時會大喊大叫。

飲食

認知障礙症(失智症)晚期患者通常會明顯消瘦。患者可能不記得如何飲食，也可能認不出給自己的食物。有些患者變得無法正常吞嚥。此時可能需要考慮為患者提供營養補品。如果患者有吞嚥困難，或在長時間內沒有飲食，健康受到影響，也可以考慮給患者提供非口服的營養補充方式。

在家照護

如果你在家裡照顧認知障礙症(失智症)晚期患者，老年人護理評估小組(ACAT)可提供所有護理方面的建議與轉介服務。你可以致電**My Aged Care**熱線電話**1800 200 422**（免費電話，使用手機撥打除外）或瀏覽**myagedcare.gov.au**，聯絡最近的老年人護理評估小組(ACAT)。

保持溝通

不論認知障礙症(失智症)患者是住在家裡還是住在養老院，請務必要不斷與他們溝通。雖然隨著認知障礙症(失智症)的發展，患者將失去大部份能力，但仍會保留某些能力，例如觸覺、聽覺，以及對情感的反應能力。

介入

如果患者進入認知障礙症(失智症)晚期而且病得很重，就可能需要討論是否對其疾病進行積極醫療介入。介入的方式可包括心臟病發作後的復甦治療，對肺炎實施抗生素治療，或給患者透過餵食食物或流質來補充營養。

決定給患者實施治療還是停止治療，這是一個重大的決定。你可以考慮以下幾個方面：

- 患者過去可能留下的任何醫療指示
- 認知障礙症(失智症)患者本人的意願
- 他們目前和未來的生活品質
- 其他家人的意見
- 醫療人員的建議

National Dementia Helpline 1800 100 500

dementia.org.au

這項決定有時只能由仲裁庭或法庭指定的監護人(有時稱為管理人或管理員)做出。每個州和領地都有不同的規定,但醫療人員或澳洲認知障礙症(失智症)協會可為你提供適當的聯絡資料。

生命盡頭

對家人和照顧者而言,為患者生命結束做好準備可能非常艱難。但若能提前思考並做好一些規劃,過程可能會稍微容易一些。

在患者接近生命末期時,人們最擔心的問題之一就是確保他們感到舒適,盡量減少痛苦。如果你擔心認知障礙症(失智症)患者可能感到有些痛苦或不適,請與醫生和護理人員討論。

死亡原因

認知障礙症(失智症)患者的死因可能是由另一種疾病引起的。患者在生命快要結束時可能非常虛弱。隨著認知障礙症(失智症)的進展,患者對感染和其他身體疾病的抵抗力會減弱。在許多病例中,肺炎等急性病症都可能會加速患者的死亡。

根據《認知障礙症(失智症)晚期》,英國阿耳茲海默氏病協會

謹記

澳洲認知障礙症(失智症)協會的專業人員提供各種心理輔導和個人支持。如果你希望談談認知障礙症(失智症)患者的逝去,請聯絡全國認知障礙症(失智症)幫助熱線,電話:

1800 100 500。這是一項保密、細緻的服務。

詳情

澳洲認知障礙症(失智症)協會提供支持、資訊、教育和輔導。請聯絡全國認知障礙症(失智症)幫助熱線:**1800 100 500**,或瀏覽我們的網站:**dementia.org.au**。



若需要語言方面的幫助,請致電口筆譯服務處電話:**131 450**。

Later stages of dementia

This Help Sheet describes what to expect in the later stages of dementia as a person with dementia becomes increasingly frail, and it highlights some issues that may be useful to consider.

People with dementia differ in the rate with which their abilities change. But because dementia is a progressive condition, their abilities will deteriorate. Most people in the later stages of dementia need total care and usually receive this in a residential facility. In some cases, families and carers will choose to care for the person at home.

What happens in the later stages of dementia?

Progressive loss of memory

This can be a particularly disturbing time for family and carers as the person with dementia may fail to recognise close family members.

Increased loss of physical abilities

Most people with dementia gradually lose their ability to walk, wash, dress and feed themselves. Other illnesses such as stroke or arthritis may also affect them. Eventually the person will be confined to a bed or a chair.

Communication

A person with dementia will have increasing difficulty in understanding what is said or what is going on around them. They may gradually lose their speech, or repeat a few words or cry out from time to time.

Eating

It is common for people in the later stages of dementia to lose a considerable amount of weight. People may forget how to eat or drink, or may not recognise the food they are given. Some people become unable to swallow properly. Providing nutrition supplements may need to be considered. If a person has swallowing difficulties, or is not consuming food or drink over a significant period of time and their health is affected, nutrition supplements may be considered for consumption other than by mouth.

Caring at home

If you are caring at home for someone who is in the later stages of dementia the Aged Care Assessment Team (ACAT) can help with advice and referrals for all aspects of care. You can contact your nearest

ACAT by calling **My Aged Care** on **1800 200 422** (free call except from mobile phones) or visit myagedcare.gov.au.

Maintaining communication

Whether the person with dementia is at home or in a residential facility, communicating with them continues to be very important. Some abilities will remain, even though many are lost as the dementia progresses. The person keeps their sense of touch and hearing and their abilities to respond to emotions.

Interventions

If someone is in the later stages of dementia and becomes seriously ill, there may be discussion about whether to actively treat their illness. Ways of intervening may include resuscitation after a heart attack, antibiotic treatment for pneumonia, or giving food or liquids by mouth.

Giving or withholding treatment is a serious decision to make for someone else and is not an easy one to make. You need to consider:

- Any instructions they may have provided at an earlier time
- What the person with dementia would have wanted themselves
- Their current and future quality of life
- The views of other family members
- The advice of medical staff

Sometimes the decision can only be made by a guardian (sometimes called managers or administrators) appointed by a tribunal or court. Each State and Territory has different regulations, but medical staff or Dementia Australia can advise you about appropriate contacts.

Towards the end

It can be very difficult for family and carers to prepare for the end, but by thinking about it and making some plans, it may be a little easier.

National Dementia Helpline 1800 100 500

dementia.org.au

When someone reaches the final stages of life, one of the main concerns is to ensure that they are comfortable and as pain free as possible. If you are concerned that the person with dementia may be in some pain or discomfort, discuss this with the doctor and nursing staff.

Cause of death

The actual death of a person with dementia may be caused by another condition. They are likely to be frail towards the end. Their ability to cope with infection and other physical problems will be impaired due to the progress of dementia. In many cases death may be hastened by an acute illness such as pneumonia.

Based on 'Later stages of dementia'
Alzheimer's Society, UK

Remember

Dementia Australia provides professional staff for counselling and individual support. If you would like to talk about the loss of a person with dementia contact the National Dementia Helpline on **1800 100 500**. This service is confidential and sensitive.

FURTHER INFORMATION

Dementia Australia offers support, information, education and counselling. Contact the National Dementia Helpline on **1800 100 500**, or visit our website at **dementia.org.au**



For language assistance phone the
Translating and Interpreting Service on
131 450