



The
**Dementia
Society**
Ottawa and Renfrew County

MIXED DEMENTIA



After receiving a diagnosis of Mixed Dementia, you may be wondering:

WHAT IS MIXED DEMENTIA?

Dementia is an umbrella term for a group of brain conditions. These conditions cause changes in the brain which lead to a wide range of symptoms. Symptoms can include changes in memory, thinking, behaviour and perceptions. These changes affect a person's ability to perform daily activities.

A person can be diagnosed with more than one type of dementia. This is called **Mixed Dementia**. More than half of all people with Alzheimer's Disease have another type of dementia at the same time. For example, Alzheimer's Disease and Vascular Dementia often occur together.

IS MIXED DEMENTIA GENETIC?

Very few cases of dementia are hereditary. In most cases, other factors make it more likely for someone to develop Dementia. Healthy lifestyle changes can reduce this risk. Common risk factors include smoking, obesity, and lack of physical activity.

- To learn more about risk factors, read the Living Well for Brain Health fact sheet, available [Here](#).

WHAT ARE THE SYMPTOMS?

Symptoms vary depending on the types of dementia a person has. A person living with Mixed Dementia could have any of the following symptoms:

- Memory loss that affects day-to-day activities
- Challenges with performing familiar tasks
- Confusion about time and place
- Challenges with language
- Changes in mood or behaviour
- Changes in judgment
- Loss of motivation
- Changes of personality

HOW IS MIXED DEMENTIA DIAGNOSED?

Mixed Dementia is difficult to diagnose. The symptoms vary depending on which types of dementia they have.

The doctor must first rule out other possible causes of symptoms. The person may be referred to a specialist for tests. There is no single test to detect Mixed Dementia. Instead, experts use a combination of tests. These includes tests of mental abilities and brain scans. Tests of mental abilities can show symptoms and their severity. Brain scans can show the location of brain damage.

It is important to diagnose the right type of dementia. Some medicines may help one type but have harmful effects for another. Getting a diagnosis can take time. It is best to express concerns to a doctor early to track changes in symptoms.

MORE INFORMATION AND RESOURCES

- Reach out to the Dementia Society - **No One Should Face Dementia Alone™** : <https://dementiahelp.ca/>
- Connect with a Dementia Care Coach: <https://dementiahelp.ca/programs-services/dementia-care-coach/>
- Sign up for the Dementia Basics workshop: <https://dementiahelp.ca/programs-services/ottawa-programs/>
- Read more about Dementia and caregiving: <https://dementiahelp.ca/understanding-dementia/resources-factsheets/>

Ottawa: 613-523-4004 **Renfrew-County:** 1-888-411-2067 | info@dsorc.org | DementiaHelp.ca

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