

TABLE. CLINICAL CHARACTERISTICS OF COMMON DEMENTIAS

	Alzheimer disease	Frontotemporal dementia	Lewy body dementia	Vascular dementia
Age of onset	>65	<65	>65	>65
First changes	Memory problems	Personality change	Fluctuating cognition, visual hallucinations, REM-sleep behavior disorder	Variable, focal neurologic symptoms
Progression	Insidious onset	Insidious onset	Insidious onset, gradual with fluctuations	Abrupt or gradual, stepwise
Motor symptoms	Apraxia	Frontal release signs	Parkinsonism	Focal weakness
Imaging	Hippocampal and generalized atrophy, temporal and parietal hypometabolism	Frontal/temporal atrophy and hypometabolism	Generalized atrophy, occipital hypometabolism	Strokes, lacunar infarcts
Pathology	Neurofibrillary tangles and amyloid plaques	Tau, transactive response DNA binding protein (TDP-43), Pick cells and Pick bodies in cortex	α -synuclein ⁺ Lewy bodies in cortex and midbrain	Arterioles with thickened vessel wall

Diagnoses of degenerative dementias are based on clinical criteria. The goal of the diagnostic process is to make a specific diagnosis, stage the disease, and identify any systemic illnesses, psychiatric conditions, or delirium that might be contributing. Ruling out other disease processes supports the specific diagnosis. The earlier the diagnosis is made, the greater the benefit in managing the illness. This Table includes clinical characteristics of common dementias. Source: Bouchachi S, Kataki M. Clinical Approach to Dementia. Practical Neurology (US). 2021; 20(5):27-30,40.