

Behavioural and psychological symptoms of dementia (BPSD)

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BPSD

- Definition
- Causes
- Frequency
- Consequences
- Presentations
- Assessment
- Management

Definitions

Psychological symptoms

- Anxiety
- Depression
- Delusions
- Hallucinations

Behavioural symptoms

- Physical agitation, aggression
- Verbal agitation
- Disinhibition
- Apathy

Frequency

Psychological symptoms

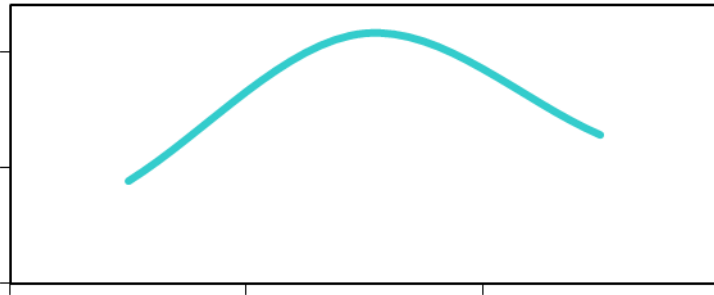
- At any time, 10% have major depression
- 50% will have a psychotic symptom at some point

Behavioural symptoms

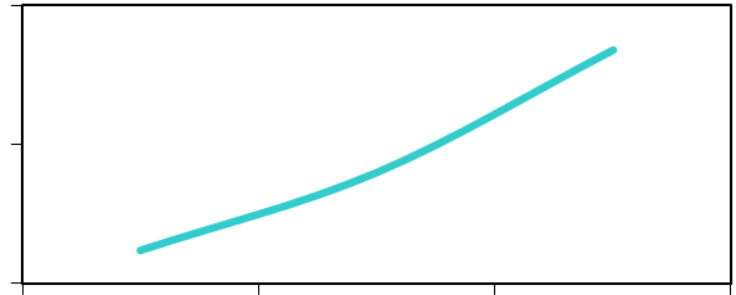
- Almost universal at some point
- But who decides?

Dementia severity

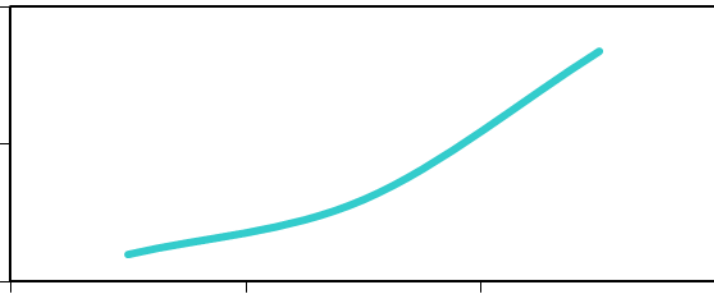
Repeats questions



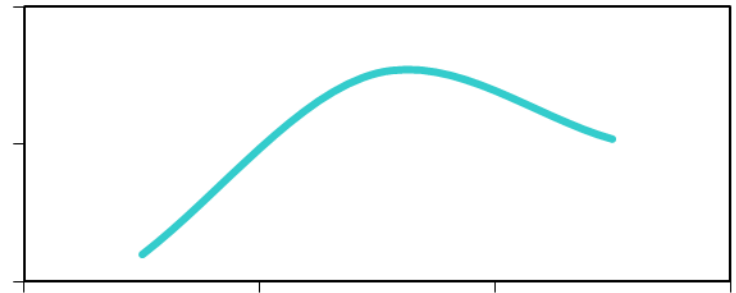
Calling out



Aggression



Night-time pottering



Causes

Neuropathological syndromes

- Lewy body dementia → visual hallucinations
- Frontal lobe dementia → disinhibited behaviours

Stress response

- Insight
- Frustration
- Disorientation
- Unmet needs

Causes

- Pain
- Delirium
- Psychological symptom → behavioural symptom
(e.g. depression, psychosis → agitation)

Consequences

Family carers

- BPSD → burden
- Admission to residential care

Residential care

- Staff stress
- Duty of care
- Mandatory reporting

Presentations

- Aged persons' mental health teams
- Emergency departments
- General hospital wards

Questions

- What?
- Where?
- When?
- Who?

Scenarios

- Case 1: NH, moderate dementia, gradually worsening resistiveness at shower times
- Case 2: Home, moderate dementia, “shadows” spouse, anxious, poor appetite and sleep
- Case 3: NH, severe dementia, physically agitated and aggressive, sleep-wake disruption, visual hallucinations over last 3 days

Assessment

Mental state exam

- Appearance, behaviour
- Affect, mood
- Thought content
- Perception
- Cognition

Collateral history

Medical work-up

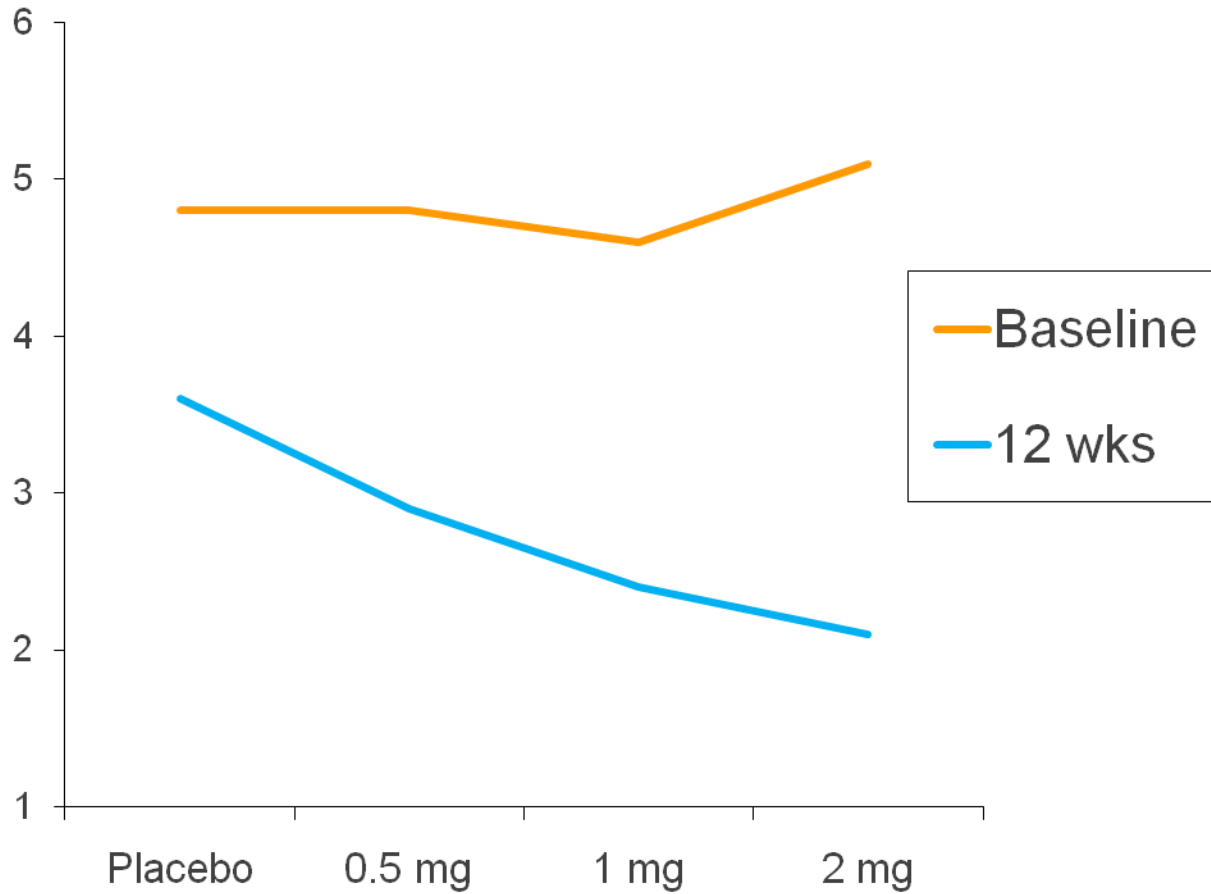
- Physical exam
- Check medications
- Lab tests, MSU

Medications

- Strongly indicated for pain, major depression, persistent psychosis
- Possibly indicated for persistent anxiety, irritability, aggression
- Treatments include analgesia, antidepressants, benzodiazepines, antipsychotics, mood stabilisers

Risperidone versus placebo

BEHAVE-AD aggression scores

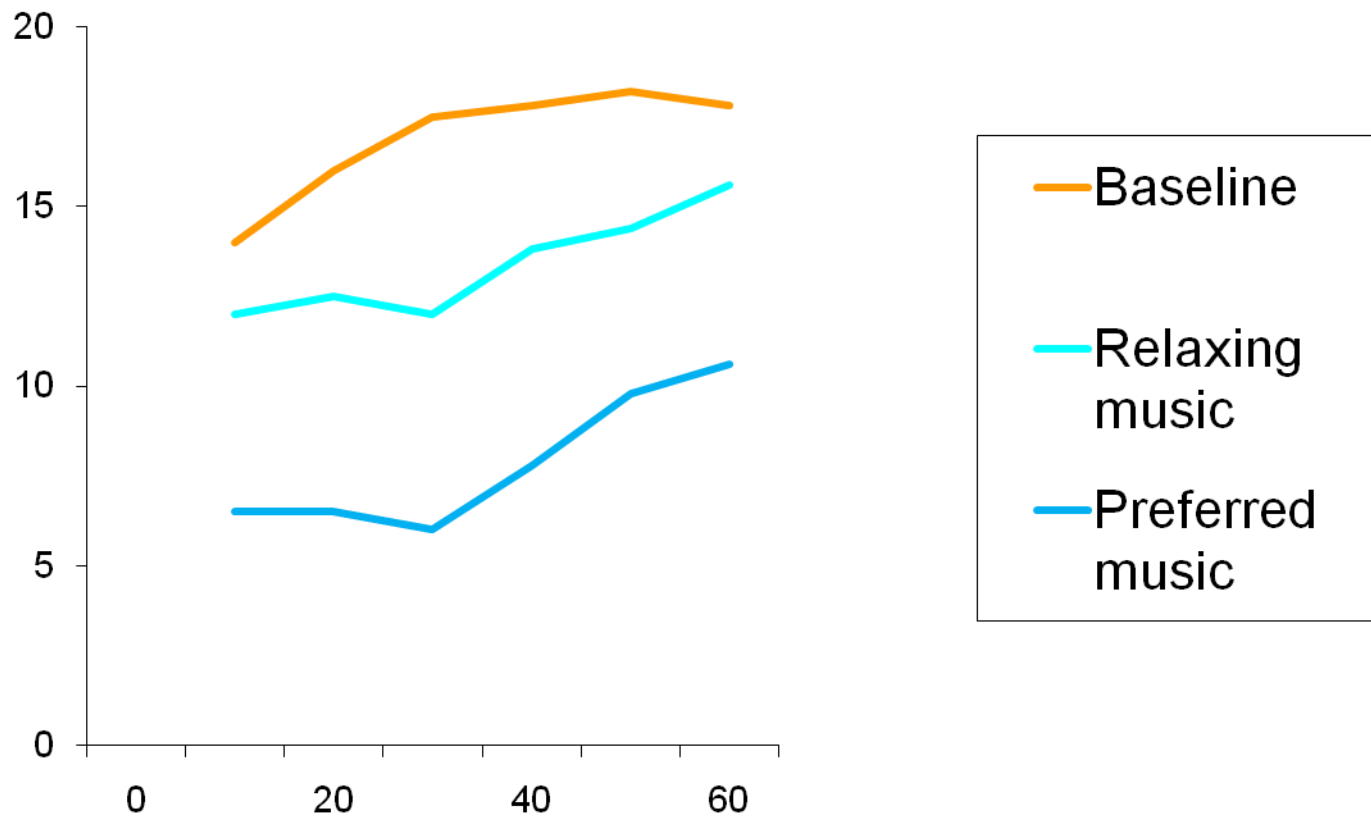


Psychosocial strategies

- Stay calm
- Try to understand what's causing the problem
- Avoid or work around it
- Individualise approaches
- Personal attention

Preferred music

Agitated behaviours



Working in the real world

- Diversional therapists
- Other staff
- Montessori principles
- Alternative therapists