About Parkinson's Dementia

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Parkinson's disease initially presents with motor symptoms, but as the disease progresses, patients may experience cognitive decline. Unlike Alzheimer's disease, which typically presents with early memory impairment, Parkinson's disease often affects other cognitive functions first, such as attention, executive function, spatial perception, or abstract thinking. Additionally, Parkinson's patients with cognitive impairment may begin to experience hallucinations or delusions. The most common type of hallucination is visual hallucination. When mild, patients may only experience illusions, such as mistaking a vase on the floor for a child. As symptoms worsen, patients may begin to see things that are not there. Initially, patients may recognize these as hallucinations, but over time, they may become increasingly unable to distinguish between what is real and what is not. In addition to hallucinations, patients may also experience delusions, creating stories that do not align with reality, such as a partner having an affair.

**What should be done when patients begin to experience cognitive impairment?**

When symptoms of cognitive decline are noticed, it is important to observe whether these symptoms are affecting daily life, work, and social relationships. If not, this indicates that symptoms are still mild, and maintaining a regular daily routine, eating whole foods and avoiding processed foods, maintaining a positive mood, engaging in social activities, and developing a regular exercise habit can help improve symptoms. If cognitive impairment has already affected daily life, work, and social relationships, it is recommended to discuss with a neurologist at the next follow-up appointment whether further tests and medication treatments are needed.

**What should be done when patients begin to experience hallucinations or delusions?**

Mild hallucinations or delusions do not require treatment. However, if these symptoms worsen rapidly, it is important to seek medical attention as soon as possible and consult with a physician to rule out the influence of medication or other systemic illnesses, such as infections.

Cognitive decline is a symptom that develops in the later stages of Parkinson's disease, and it can greatly affect the quality of life for patients and their families. Early detection, early treatment, and maintaining a healthy lifestyle and positive mood can all be helpful.