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YOUR FAMILY		
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HEALTH NOW

BE THE BEST YOU CAN BE WITH THE LATEST NEWS

KNOW THE DIFFERENCE

Dr Kerry Armstrong, psychiatrist at Akeso Milnerton in Cape Town, breaks down the differences between the major cognitive impairment disorders Alzheimer's, Parkinson's, and vascular dementia.

ALZHEIMER'S

Who it affects

5-10% of those in their 70s, increasing to around 40% in those older than 85. It's the most common form of dementia, accounting for around 60-90% of all cases.

Symptoms

Memory loss regarding recent events occurs first, with initial sparing of remote memory. Language problems may occur, with word-finding difficulties progressing to severe communication problems. Individuals find difficulty in performing everyday tasks, and recognising objects and faces; behavioural problems, mood changes and psychosis may occur as the disease progresses.

Why it occurs

Results from the death of brain cells caused by the abnormal processing of amyloid precursor protein in the brain. Environmental factors and conditions such as high blood pressure and diabetes may increase your risk. However, the disease is also hereditary.

VS

PARKINSON'S

Who it affects

0.3% of the general population, with prevalence increasing with age. It occurs with gradual appearance of symptoms, usually beginning in the mid-50s.

Symptoms

A resting, 'pill-rolling' tremor (a rhythmic circular movement of the tips of the thumb and index finger), stiffness and slowness of movement. One side of the body is typically involved first, with the other side following later. A stooped posture and expressionless or 'masked' facial appearance may develop. People may start to walk with small shuffling steps and become unsteady on their feet.

Why it occurs

While the exact cause is not known, it's likely that both genetic and environmental factors are involved. Results from the loss of cells in certain areas of the brain.

VS

VASCULAR DEMENTIA

Who it affects

Develops in around 15-30% of individuals who have experienced a stroke or vascular disease, which impacts the brain.

Symptoms

Symptoms are diverse and depend largely on the nature of the brain changes caused by the vascular disease. Problems with reasoning, planning and organising are typical. Deficits affecting memory, language, coordinating tasks and recognition are variable. Movement and coordination may be involved. Behavioural problems and mood changes including depression may occur.

Why it occurs

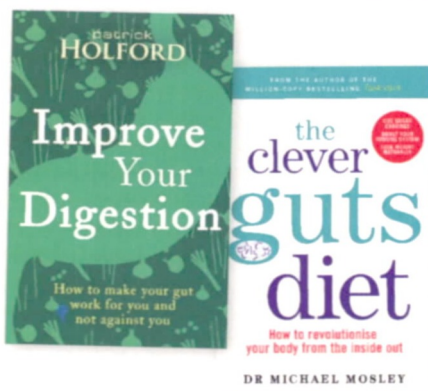
Major risk factors include high blood pressure, diabetes, smoking, obesity and raised cholesterol levels.

If you or a family member are concerned about any of these symptoms, visit a medical practitioner as soon as possible in order to ensure early diagnosis and appropriate management.

GUT HEALTH

Harmonise your digestive health with these two new titles.

Seasoned author and nutritional expert, Patrick Holford, has updated and improved one of his best-selling titles, *Improve your Digestion*. From a detailed explanation of how our 'second brain' functions to why it's important to maintain a healthy gut and how to go about achieving it, Patrick debunks the myth 'you are what you eat', arguing instead that 'you are what you digest and absorb'.



Go online to Patrickholford.com/health-club and take Patrick's free health test.

The Clever Guts Diet by Dr Michael Mosley focuses on the unique microbiome of the stomach and shows just what junk food and overuse of antibiotics does to disturb the natural balance. Filled with recipes and meal plans, and the tips and tools you need to transform your gut.

Over a lifetime, no less than 100 tonnes of food will pass along the digestive tract. (Patrick Holford)

Mental health in the workplace

At least 30% of South Africans will suffer from a mental disorder during their lifetime. Mental illness has direct consequences on an individual's behaviour and productivity, with significant consequences in the workplace.

The intervention? Fedhealth's mental health programme uses innovative solutions for employee empowerment, and relies on social, family and workplace support. Any manager who detects that an employee has a mental health issue can advise them to enquire whether they qualify for enrolment in the Fedhealth Mental Health programme. The member must contact Fedhealth as it needs member consent and involvement for programme enrolment for qualifying beneficiaries.

For more info, call 0860 002 153, follow the prompts to the Disease Management Programme and select the Mental Health Programme, or email mentalhealth@fedhealth.co.za

Home tests

Wondering whether those symptoms you're experiencing are related to an allergy, or whether hubby's stomach problems are due to gluten intolerance? Glenmark has created easy and accurate diagnostic tests for home use that offer quick results to determine whether anyone in the family is suffering from allergies or intolerances. There's no need to pay for expensive blood tests – these convenient, self-diagnostic tests are available from leading pharmacies. From R149.



TAKE CARE OF *the girls*

This Breast Cancer Awareness month, make sure you're taking care of your breasts by self-examining at least once a month for any abnormalities (after your period is the best time), and making sure they get the best daily treatment by wearing a properly fitted bra. Two out of three women wear the wrong size bra for their body and breast shape, which can lead to aches and pains, pinched tissue and unnecessary sagging.

Taryn Palacios, owner of The Bra Guru in Joburg, shares her top three reasons for having your bra size checked professionally.

- 1 It's all about support! Your breasts are made up entirely of fatty tissue and glands – there's no muscle in your breasts to hold them up. By wearing an ill-fitting bra, you can place strain on your back and ligaments. This strain can result in back, neck and shoulder pain – and may even cause headaches.
 - 2 It's essential that your breast tissue is fully covered by your bra. Is a wire pinching and bothering you, or is your breast folding or bulging out the sides? You probably have the incorrect cup size. You should also lift and place your breasts into each cup once the bra band is secured to make sure none of the tissue is trapped. Good support gives you comfort and can significantly reduce your breasts from sagging and ageing.
 - 3 A good bra will give your body shape and enhance your silhouette; you can look slimmer instantly by wearing the correct bra!
- Taryn says, 'Most women are surprised to learn they should be wearing a bigger cup size and a smaller band size – it's important to know that 90% of your bra's support comes from your band. The band should fit quite firmly so that it supports your breasts – the support comes from the band and not the shoulder straps.'

DID YOU KNOW?

Breast cancer affects men too. According to The American Cancer Society, about 2 470 new cases of invasive breast cancer will be diagnosed in men in the United States during 2017. While less common than in women, the lifetime risk of getting breast cancer for men is about 1 in 1 000.

