



# Dementia and Delirium

## Dementia<sup>1,2</sup>

gradual cognitive and behavioral changes that affect your daily function, demonstrate a decline, and are not due to any other mental disorder.

### Signs & Symptoms<sup>3</sup>

- Memory loss, often noticed by someone else
- Difficulty communicating or finding words
- Difficulty with visual and spatial abilities, such as getting lost while driving
- Difficulty reasoning or problem-solving
- Difficulty handling complex tasks
- Difficulty with planning and organizing
- Difficulty with coordination and motor functions
- Confusion and disorientation
- Personality changes
- Depression
- Anxiety
- Inappropriate behavior
- Etc.



## Delirium<sup>4</sup>

An acute disturbance in cognitive ability that results in confused thinking and reduced awareness of the environment

Symptoms are similar to those of Dementia, but have a rapid onset and are atypical from a person's "normal." Symptoms tend to be worse at night when it's dark and things look less familiar

**Risk Factors** include: severe/ chronic illness, changes in metabolic balance(nutrients), medications, infection (often UTI), surgical intervention, alcohol/ drug intoxication or withdraw

## How can Physical Therapy Help?<sup>5,6,7,8</sup>

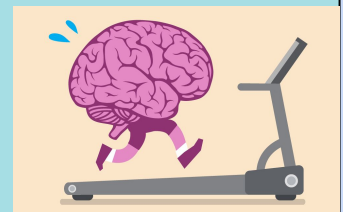
### Delirium

- Early Detection
- Promote sleep/wake cycle
- Re-orientation to person, place, situation, and time
- Early mobility/ exercise



### Dementia

- Early mobility/ exercise
- Improve strength/ balance to decrease fall risk
- Challenge with multitask training
- Slow the decline of memory loss
- Patient/ family education
- Increase Independence



Community Resources in North Carolina: Dementia Alliance of North Carolina

<https://dementianc.org/community-outreach/partner-organizations/>

## References:

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