

DISEASE SUMMARIES and SYMPTOMS *at a glance*

Corticobasal Degeneration (CBD)

CBD is a degenerative disorder of the brain with no cure at present.

The difficulty in diagnosing CBD has led to the creation of red flags to act as warning signs that may raise clinical suspicion of CBD.

- Rare neurodegenerative brain disease that affects the cortex (frontoparietal) and basal ganglia
- Originally described in 1968 by Drs. Rebeiz, Kolodny, and Richardson with earliest descriptions by Charcot (1888).
- Pathologically classified as a tauopathy (accumulation of the tau protein in the brain).
- Onset of symptoms is markedly asymmetrical.
- Diagnosis is difficult because clinical features often overlap with Parkinson's disease, progressive supranuclear palsy (PSP), Alzheimer's disease, primary progressive aphasia (PPA), and frontotemporal dementia (FTD).
- Average age of onset is usually in the 60s.
- Prevalence unknown; estimated to be less than one case per 100,000 people.
- Slightly more common in women.
- Life expectancy averages seven years after symptom onset, with a wide range.
- No known way to reverse or stop the progression, though many symptoms can be reduced with medication or other therapy.

Signs and Symptoms

- Asymmetrical presentation; symptoms begin on one side and always remain worse
- Slowness and stiffness
- Shakiness
- Clumsiness in UEs or LEs
- Dysphasia, dysarthria, and dysphagia
- Changes in gait and balance
- Mild memory or behavior problems
- Increased parkinsonian symptoms (rigidity, bradykinesia, postural instability)
- Tremor
- Myoclonus
- Dystonia
- Blepharospasm (involuntary eyelid spasm)
- Sensory loss, especially for the position of the limbs in space.
- Increasing speech and swallowing difficulty
- Mild to moderate cognitive impairments
- Frontal dementia



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