

Alzheimer's disease

- Most common form of dementia
- ↑ prevalence with age; rare <45 yrs

Pathogenesis

- Early onset disease has **autosomal dominant** inheritance
- Late onset is polygenic
- ↑ risk if one of the alleles of **apolipoprotein E** is inherited
- Macroscopically atrophic brain, primarily cerebral cortex and hippocampus
- Histologically, **senile plaques** and **neurofibrillary tangles** in cortex. Plaques have significant amyloid deposit with +ve staining for protein **ubiquitin**

Clinical Features

- Impaired ability to remember new info
- Gradually impaired memory + disorders of cortical function
- Short and long term memory affected
- Later, apraxia, visuospatial impairment and aphasia
- Patient notices these problems in early stages, does not acknowledge them in later stages (**anosognosia**)
- Depression
- Present with subjective memory loss, getting lost in familiar locations, H/o progressive memory loss, associated functional impairment

Investigations

- To exclude treatable causes of dementia

Management

- **Anticholinesterases** ↓ Physostigmine, neostigmine
- **NMDA receptor antagonist** ↓ Ketamine helps in early disease
- Provision of **familiar surroundings**, **support for carers**
- **Anti depressants**