

WHAT IS HUNTINGTON'S DISEASE?

30,000 People in the U.S. are Affected by Huntington's Disease

The Brain May Be Reduced By As Much As 25-30 % in Advanced Huntington's Disease Cases.

Huntington's Disease is a genetic neurological disorder that causes the progressive breakdown of nerve cells in the brain, impairing functional abilities and resulting in cognitive, motor and psychiatric disorders.

Children of Huntington's Disease patients have a 50% chance of inheriting the gene that causes the disease. If the child does not inherit the gene, he or she will not develop the disease and cannot pass it down to their children.

Please read and share this guide to help raise awareness about Huntington's Disease, including symptoms, treatment and support options.

01 | Onset and Symptoms

Most people develop symptoms in their 30's or 40's. Symptoms are progressive and include:

- Uncontrolled movements (chorea)
- Abnormal body posture
- Changes in behavior, emotions and cognition
- Impaired coordination
- Slurred speech
- Difficulty swallowing

02 | Treatment

There is no cure for Huntington's Disease, and although treatment cannot stop or reverse the progression of the disease, there are medications that can improve symptoms such as chorea, hallucinations, depression and anxiety. Treatment options may include:

- **Medications** to suppress involuntary movements, antipsychotics and antidepressants.
- **Therapy** options that may be required include psychotherapy to manage behavioral problems, speech therapy to improve communication, eating

and swallowing, and physical therapy to improvement balance, coordination and flexibility.

03 | Support

Due to the progressive nature of the disease, patients will eventually require assistance with daily activities and care. Therefore, it is important to create a supportive environment. In the later stages of Huntington's Disease, professional care may be required, either at home or in a long-term facility.

- **Plan Ahead** – start your search early for a facility that is familiar with Huntington's Disease.
- **Ask for Help** – there are social workers who have experience in finding long-term care placement for people with Huntington's Disease.

For additional resources, please visit:
<http://hdsa.org/living-with-hd/>

Did You Know?

Huntington's Disease is the breakdown of nerve cells in the brain

References

<https://www.ninds.nih.gov/Disorders/All-Disorders/Huntingtons-Disease-Information-Page>

<https://www.mayoclinic.org/diseases-conditions/huntingtons-disease/symptoms-causes/syc-20356117>