



Primary Progressive Aphasia

What is Primary Progressive Aphasia (PPA)?

Primary Progressive Aphasia (PPA) is a neurological disorder that involves a progressive loss of language functioning. Unlike a stroke or traumatic brain injury, PPA is a degenerative condition related to shrinkage in the parts of the brain responsible for speech and language. PPA most commonly originates from Alzheimer's Disease or Frontotemporal Lobar Degeneration pathology. Most people who develop this condition are in their 50s and 60s, however older individuals are also diagnosed with PPA.

What are the signs and symptoms of PPA?

In order to be classified as PPA, language must be the most prominent area of impairment when symptoms first begin. Other areas of cognition, such as memory and reasoning, are usually not affected in the early stages of the disease, but they often become impaired as the disease progresses.

PPA manifests gradually, with varying speech and language symptoms depending on the areas of the brain affected by the disease. Individuals with PPA may experience a variety of speech and language difficulties such as coming up with words, slow speech, problems with grammar, understanding others, and transforming thoughts into speech or writing.

What are the three subtypes of PPA?

PPA researchers have recognized three separate variants that describe clusters of symptoms that often co-occur. Although not all patients clearly fit into a single category, clinicians use the variants as a guideline to make predictions about the underlying cause and future course of the disease.

Logopenic Variant: Word finding difficulty and impaired repetition of sentences and phrases. Areas of preservation often include: Fluent and grammatical speech, understanding the meaning of words

Semantic Variant: Word finding difficulty and difficulty understanding meanings of words. Areas of preservation often include: fluent and grammatical speech, repetition

Non-fluent Variant: Difficulty with using basic grammar and syntax, or word order and sentence structure. or effortful/halting speech. Areas of preservation often include: understanding the meaning of words