

Neuropathy

- Onset is linked with the degeneration of the substantia nigra, potentially causing a decrease in dopamine levels

Treatment of Parkinson's

- Dopamine precursors (such as L-Dopa) are prescribed to relieve symptoms but its effectiveness decreases over time and continued use.
- Brain stimulation, particularly bilateral stimulation of subthalamic nucleus
- Exercise can reduce motor symptoms by increasing levels of physical functioning, leg strength and walking speed; Tai Chi in particular works to improve balance so patients suffer from fewer falls

↳ Difficulties encouraging exercise; patients generally unwilling to put the work in as in the beginning, exercise could be painful.

- Actual cause is still unknown but several elements have been implicated e.g. genes, neurotoxins, viral infection.
- Parkinson's plus syndromes; exhibit additional features, have faster progression and are less responsive to treatments.

Huntington's Disease/Chorea

- First described by George Huntington in 1872

- ↳ Symptoms include jerky movements and a marked reduction in numerous cognitive functions.
- ↳ Progressive, with onset generally in late 40's with a 15 year life expectancy after diagnosis.
- ↳ Affects 1 in 10,000 W. Europeans and 1 in 1 million Asian/Africans
- ↳ Identified as carried on a dominant gene so any carrier is affected, with a 50% chance of passing the disease onto their offspring. A genetic test available to test potentially potential incidence.
- ↳ Although there is no cure, symptoms are managed with anti-depressants and anti-psychotics.

Motor Neurone Disease

- Group of diseases that affect motor neurones in the spinal cord; Lou Gehrig's Disease, primary lateral sclerosis, bulbar palsy, progressive muscular atrophy.

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