

Corticobasal Degeneration (CBD)

What is Corticobasal Degeneration?

Corticobasal Degeneration (CBD) is a rare and progressive neurological condition that affects nerve cells in the brain. This can affect movement, behaviour, cognition and vision.

A combination of the systems caused by CBD can lead to difficulties in communication and swallowing.

If you wish to know more information about your diagnosis and support available in your area, please visit the charity website on www.pspassociation.org.uk and click on the CBD links.

How can CBD affect communication?

The majority of people diagnosed with CBD will experience problems with their communication.

Typical characteristics include:

- Dysarthria – slow and slurred speech
- Apraxia – having trouble saying what you want to say correctly and consistently
- Reduced ability to maintain eye contact.

People with CBD can experience decreased cognitive functioning, which may also impact communication. People may experience:

- Problems with language (e.g. word-finding difficulties, difficulties understanding spoken and written language, difficulties forming sentences).
- Slow thinking/slow learning/reduced attention and inability to follow fast conversations
- Losing one's train of thought while speaking.
- Difficulties problem-solving and forward planning.
- Problems storing and retrieving memories
- Difficulty making sense of perceptions/concepts.
- Difficulty sequencing actions, making it harder to carry out everyday tasks.

How can Speech and Language Therapy help?

Your Speech and Language Therapist can:

- Offer advice/strategies & provide specific exercises/programmes to help improve speech intelligently.
- Introduce alternative communication systems, which can help you to express yourself if speech becomes difficult.

How can CBD affect swallowing?

CBD may affect your ability to swallow. Symptoms may include:

- Coughing/choking when eating and drinking
- Drooling and poor saliva management
- Difficulty clearing & controlling food/drink in the mouth
- Delayed swallow reflex
- Food sticking in throat
- Problems swallowing medication
- Discomfort in chest or throat/recurrent chest infections
- Increased phlegm which is difficult to clear
- Fatigue when eating and drinking

Four main problems linked to dysphagia:

- **Chest Infections:** caused by food or drink going into the lungs rather than the stomach (aspiration)
- **Reduced food intake:** not eating enough food can result in malnutrition, weight loss and reduced energy
- **Reduced fluid intake:** not drinking enough can result in constipation and dehydration

- **Choking:** food blocking the airway can stop your breathing (asphyxiation)

How can Speech and Language Therapy help?

It is important to identify symptoms of swallowing difficulties early. The speech and language therapist can offer advice regarding swallowing techniques and food/ drink texture modification (dependent on the stage of your condition).

They can provide compensatory strategies to help ensure food and drink is being swallowed safely. Or explore alternative methods of eating and drinking (e.g. feeding tubes) if they are needed for the long-term.

Saliva Management

Some people with CBD experience thick saliva, whilst others experience increased amounts of thin saliva. There are a range of treatment options that can be considered and a hand-out is available on the PSP Association website which outlines some options available. It would be advisable to discuss this with your Speech and Language Therapist and GP to get the best treatment option available for you.

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If you would like to talk to someone outside the service contact the **Patient Experience Team** on **0800 783 5774**, or email cdda-tr.PatientExperienceCDDFT@nhs.net.

We can make this information available in Braille, large print, audio or other languages on request.