

Mayo Clinic News Network

Understanding Lewy Body Dementia

Video	Audio
	In this lab, Mayo Clinic experts study a disease called dementia with Lewy bodies, or DLB. Some experts say It's the most common disorder you may not have ever heard of.
Brad Boeve, M.D. Neurology Mayo Clinic	"Dementia with Lewy bodies, or DLB, as its often abbreviated, is the second most common cause of dementia, especially among the elderly."
Vivien Williams stand up	Neurologist Dr. Brad Boeve says DLB is often misdiagnosed because it shares symptoms with Alzheimer's and Parkinson's disease: memory issues and slow, stiff movements. People with DLB may also have visual hallucinations and they may act out dreams at night. Getting the right diagnosis is key because there are medications that don't work for Alzheimer's but may help improve symptoms of Lewy body dementia.
	Here's why. In Alzheimer's disease, many of your brain cells, or neurons, die. In Lewy body disease, some neurons die, but many are still alive. They're just not working properly. Certain medications, called cholinesterase inhibitors, help trigger nerve impulses from one brain cell to the next, sometimes improving symptoms. But again, DLB can be tough to diagnose.
Brad Boeve, M.D. Neurology Mayo Clinic	"This is complicated. It can present in a variety of ways, so it's a challenge to educate clinicians that see a lot of these patients."
	Dr. Boeve and his colleagues in Mayo Clinic's Lewy Body Dementia Research Program are hosts of an international conference on DLB. They're dedicated to finding answers and treatments for this disease to help improve quality of life for patients and their families.
Vivien Williams	For the Mayo Clinic News Network, I'm Vivien Williams

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