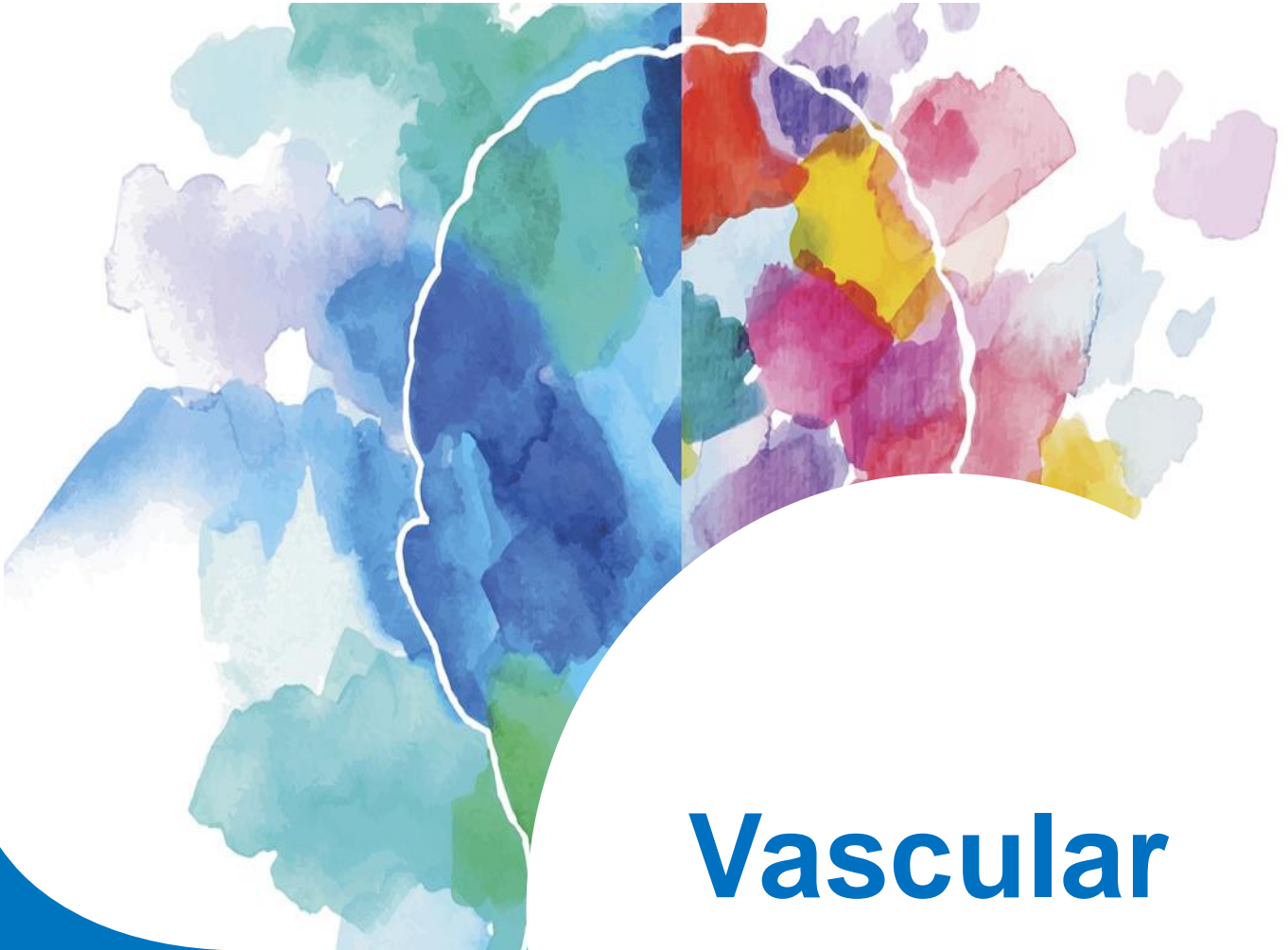




Tallaght
University
Hospital

Ospidéal
Ollscoile
Thamhlachta

An Academic Partner of Trinity College Dublin



Vascular Dementia

FACTSHEET

TUH Memory Assessment and Support Service

Dementia is a group of symptoms which can affect memory, thinking and behaviour severely enough to interfere with daily life.

Vascular dementia is a condition that can cause changes in thinking, reasoning, planning, judgment and memory, due to restricted blood flow to the brain.



How do you get Vascular Dementia?

To be healthy and function properly, the brain cells need a good supply of blood. The blood is delivered through a network of arteries. If this vascular system within the brain becomes damaged and blood cannot reach the brain cells. Without a constant supply of blood, the cells will die. This is what happens in a stroke and vascular dementia is often related to a recent (within 6 months) stroke.

Vascular dementia often co-exists alongside other causes of dementia such as Alzheimer's disease.

What causes damage to the vascular system in the brain?

There are a number of things that can cause or increase damage to the vascular system. These include high blood pressure, heart problems, high cholesterol and diabetes.

This means it is important that these conditions are identified and treated at the earliest opportunity. Controlling them can help reduce the risk of developing vascular dementia.

What are the symptoms?

- Confusion
- Trouble paying attention and concentrating
- Reduced ability to organise thoughts or actions
- Decline in ability to solve a problem develop a solution and tell others what the problem / solution is
- Problems with memory
- Restlessness and agitation
- Unsteady walk
- Sudden or frequent urge to urinate or inability to control passing urine
- Depression or apathy

How is vascular dementia treated?

Although the brain damage that causes vascular dementia cannot be reversed, it may be possible to slow the progression of the dementia in a number of ways.

These include:

- Taking medication to treat any underlying conditions, such as stroke, high blood pressure, high cholesterol, diabetes or heart problems
- Adopting a healthier lifestyle by stopping smoking, taking regular exercise, eating healthily, and drinking alcohol only in moderation



- Receiving rehabilitative support, such as physiotherapy, occupational therapy and speech therapy, to help the person maximise their abilities.