

Is It Dementia or Alzheimer's?

Presented at the

*Capacity to Care: Building Competency in
Geriatric Mental Health Care*

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by

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Emory ADRC

- Early detection of memory disorders
- Cutting edge clinical trials
- State of the art treatment
- Support for people with Alzheimer's & their families
- Education of healthcare providers & the community



Objectives

- Alzheimer's disease symptoms
 - Diagnostic process
- Strategies for Alzheimer's disease symptoms
 - Memory, mood & behavior symptoms
- Research Progress

Definition of Dementia:

- A syndrome of progressive decline
- Gradually erodes intellectual abilities
- Results in cognitive & functional deterioration
- Leads to impairment of social and occupational functioning'

“Dementia”

- It does not tell you what is **CAUSING** the dementia
- Is an general term
- It is not a diagnosis
- Therefore you do not know how to treat the dementia

Cognitive Changes in Dementia

- Memory
- Language
- Spacial
- Attention
- Executive Function
 - Ability to plan and organize
 - Decision making capacity

Diagnosing Memory & Cognitive Problems

Physicians today use a number of tools to diagnose:

- a detailed patient history
- information from family and friends
- physical and neurological exams
- lab tests
- neuropsychological tests
- imaging tools such as CT scan, or magnetic resonance imaging (MRI).

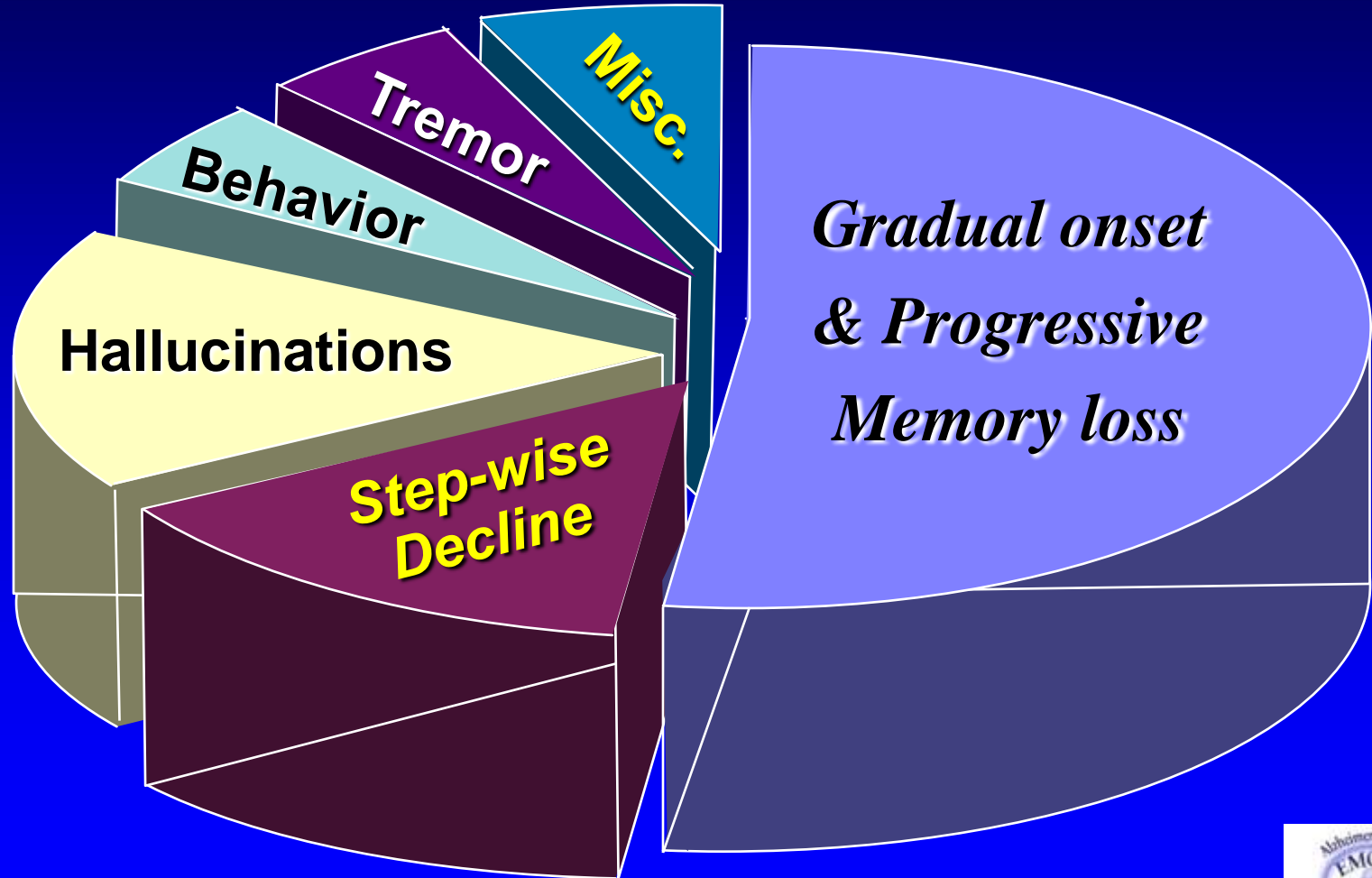


History of Onset of Problem

How Did the Problem Develop?

- Was there a sudden onset? Did the problem get worse over hours or days?
- Has there a stepwise progression
- Has the problem gradually gotten worse over months or years?

Early Symptoms Provide Clues



Causes of Dementia that MAY be reversible

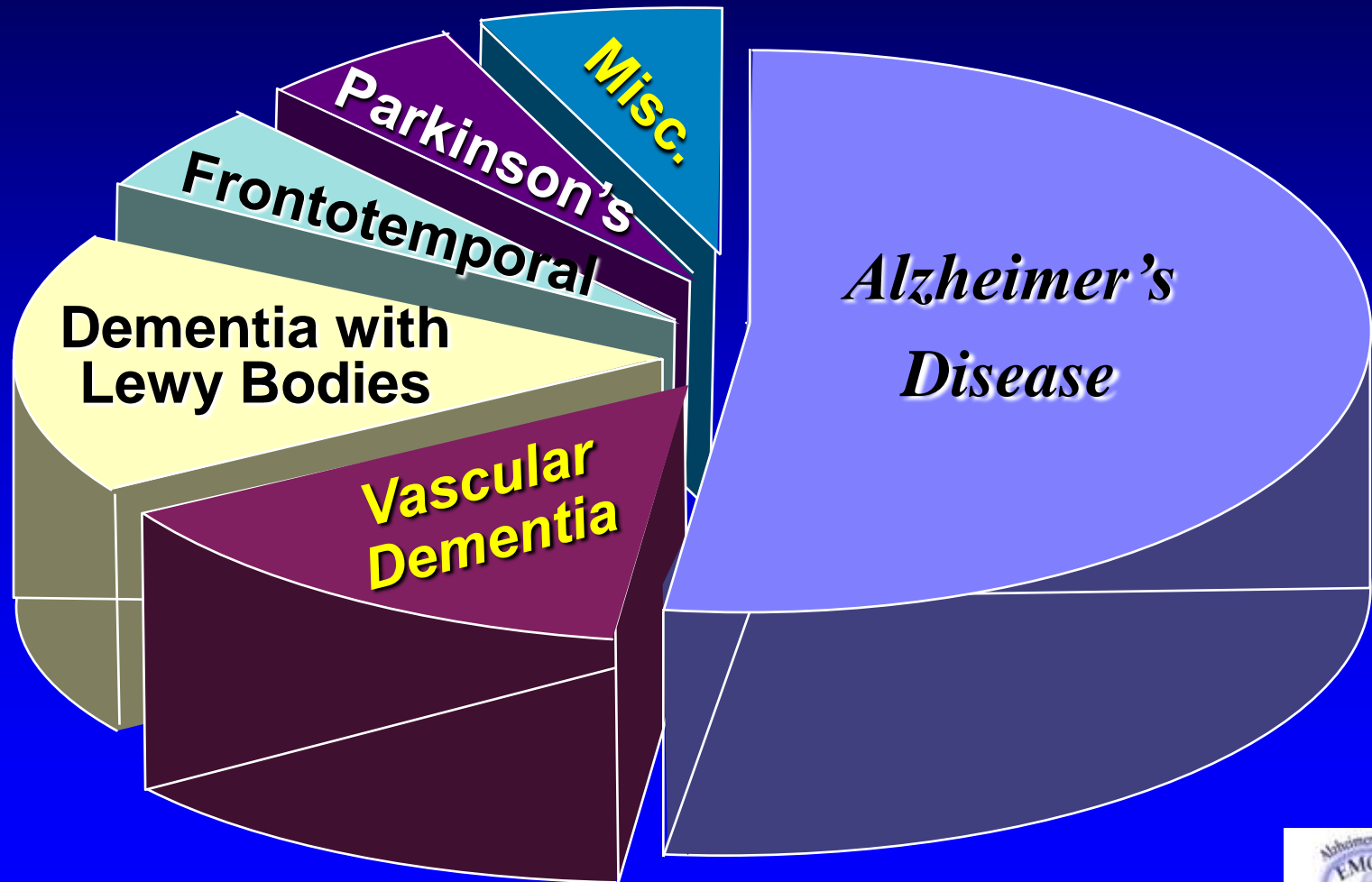
- Delirium
 - Infections
 - Hospitalization and/or surgery
 - Dehydration
 - Medication reaction
- B12 Deficiency
- Thyroid Disease

- Depression

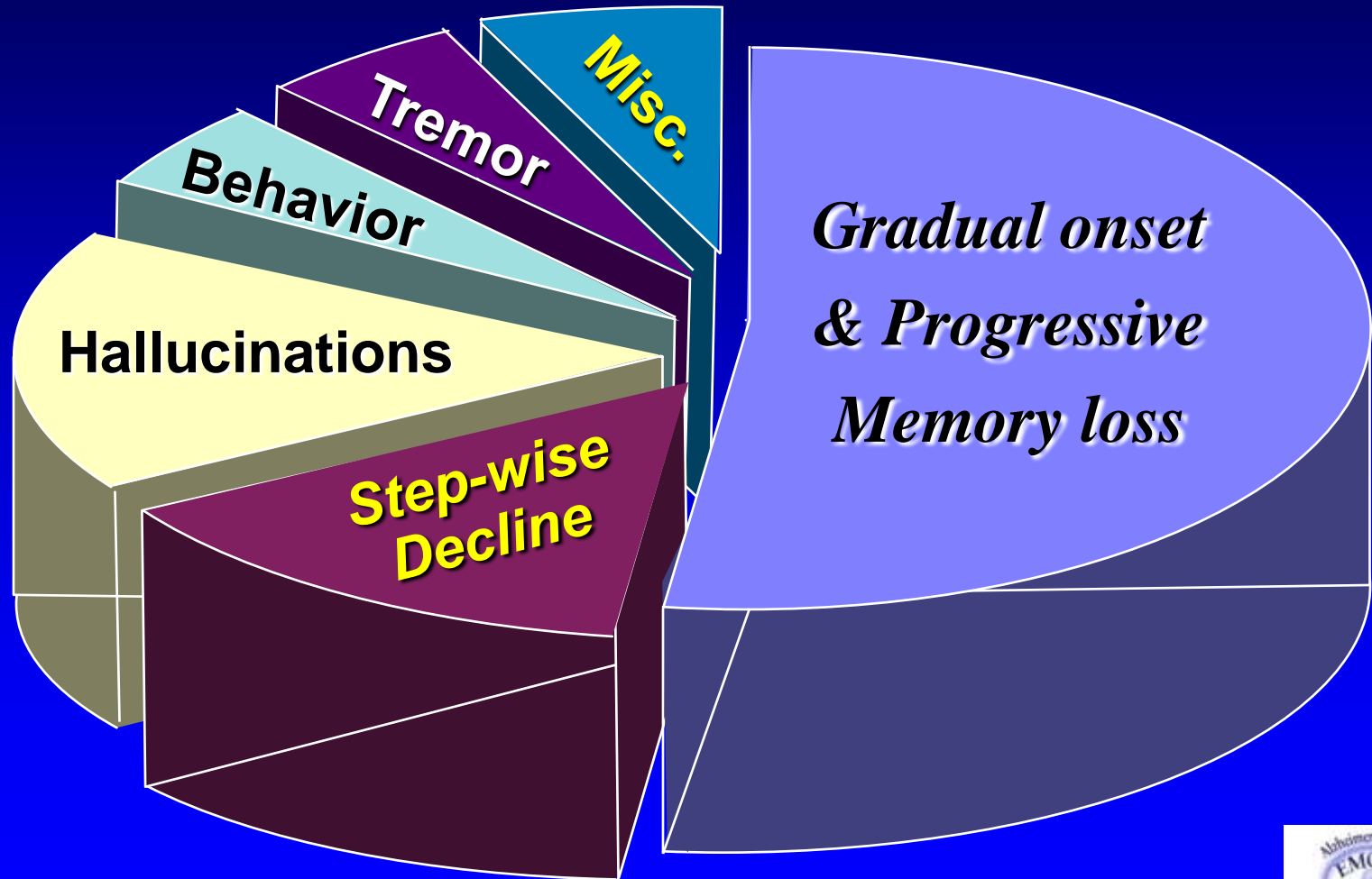
Irreversible Causes of Dementia

- Alzheimer's Disease
 - Vascular Dementia (caused by strokes)
 - Frontal-temporal Dementia
 - Lewy Body Dementia
- There are many other lesser known disorders that cause irreversible dementia

What is the Diagnosis



Early Symptoms Provide Clues



Treatment for Alzheimer's Disease

There are two classes of medications approved for the treatment of AD:

Cholinesterase inhibitors

Aricept

Razadyne - Galantamine

Exelon

Memantine - Namenda

