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Memory Impairment in Frontotemporal Dementia

The defining characteristics of behavioral variant frontotemporal dementia (bvFTD) include the core features of personality/behavioral changes associated with executive and/or language dysfunction with relative preservation of memory and visuospatial functioning. Evidence from several groups of investigators has demonstrated that memory impairment is often present in those who otherwise meet criteria for bvFTD. This presentation will present data from the literature as well as from the ARTFL-LEFFTDS Longitudinal Frontotemporal Lobar Degeneration (ALLFTD; www.allftd.org) Consortium regarding memory impairment in sporadic and familial frontotemporal lobar degeneration (FTLD). Data on members of familial FTLD kindreds who harbor a pathogenic mutation in an FTLD-associated gene and have mild bvFTD features but not overt dementia – otherwise known as “Mild Behavioral and/or Cognitive Impairment in bvFTD” (MBCI-FTD) – will also be presented. These findings underscore that while “relative preservation of memory” remains worthy in the diagnostic classification scheme of bvFTD, the presence of memory impairment should not necessarily negate the presence of underlying FTLD pathology.

