

Early Diagnosis

Much is written about 'Early Diagnosis' at this point in time especially focussed on conditions such as Parkinson's Disease (PD) and related conditions on the grounds that it will be much easier to treat if it can be 'caught' in the early stages.

But how can you make decisions about your condition years before full blown symptoms appear when a) you don't know how your condition will develop, whether you will be able to live with and accept your condition? - or it will develop into something serious that will cause suffering and inconvenience to yourself and your family? b) your own knowledge about your condition and possible treatment is likely to be rudimentary? c) what treatment, therapies and possibly cures there might be available in the future?

Population: How are the powers that be going to protect us – if that is what it will be – against PD and other conditions? Is everybody going to be scanned for all ailments and conditions known to man? – and what about those that are not known to man? How are the powers that be going to select who to diagnose? - those with a family history of certain ailments such as PD?

Are PD and related conditions – Alzheimer's, Dementia – actual illnesses for which there one day may be a cure? – or are they just mental and physical changes that has to be tolerated and accepted as they develop through life? Are the treatments and therapies available now and being developed geared towards alleviate and reduce suffering and inconvenience – geared towards *manage* the condition, making the unpleasant aspects of the condition bearable for the 'patient' him/herself, friends, family and carers? – or are they intent on changing the personality of 'patient' to suit some 'norm'?

If I had been told twenty years ago that I would develop the way I have, I feel that I might either a) be persuaded to accept treatment that might prove unnecessary or ineffective or b) not believe the message.

Yes, to have PD is a nuisance and an inconvenience and of course I would rather be without the tremors, the dystonia etc., but would I like to know twenty years in advance?

On initial diagnosis the I understand most patients will be told two things a) that there is no cure and b) the condition is progressive throughout the rest of the person's life. If I could be told with 100% certainty that I would get it and it would develop into something very serious perhaps I would think about having an advance diagnosis, but is it or will it ever be possible to tell with certainty how it is going to develop?

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