

Wendy Williams diagnosed with frontotemporal dementia, aphasia

OSF HealthCare Newsroom

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BROADCAST SCRIPT

VO/SOT #1

RECENTLY – FORMER TALK SHOW HOST WENDY WILLIAMS' CARE TEAM ANNOUNCED SHE HAS APHASIA... AND FRONTOTEMPORAL DEMENTIA... OR F-T-D.

THIS COMES ONE YEAR AFTER ACTOR BRUCE WILLIS' FAMILY ANNOUNCED HIS APHASIA DIAGNOSIS PROGRESSED INTO F-T-D AS WELL.

TAKE VO

F-T-D AFFECTS BETWEEN 50 AND 60-THOUSAND PEOPLE IN THE UNITED STATES... MOST PATIENTS ARE BETWEEN 45 AND 65-YEARS-OLD ACCORDING TO THE ALZHEIMER'S ASSOCIATION.

THE DISEASE IS PROGRESSIVE – MEANING SYMPTOMS GET WORSE OVER TIME.

DR. DEEPAK NAIR (**NYE-ER**) – A NEUROLOGIST WITH OSF HEALTHCARE – SAYS

HIS TEAM WORKS WITH SPEECH PATHOLOGISTS TO ASSESS A PATIENTS' LANGUAGE FUNCTION.

ARE THEY ABLE TO NAME OBJECTS? CAN THEY REPEAT PHRASES OR SENTENCES?

HE SAYS BRUCE WILLIS' FAMILY OPENING UP ABOUT THIS... COULD HELP OTHER FAMILIES.

15 SECOND SOT: "Having this discussed publicly is a powerful thing. People are now going to pay attention to this. I'm sure there are a lot of Google searches about FTD and aphasia. Some increase in public awareness is a huge benefit to all of us."

VO TAG

DR. NAIR SAYS THERE HASN'T BEEN ANY RESEARCH SHOWING A DIRECT CORRELATION BETWEEN PRIOR INJURIES CAUSING F-T-D.

HE SAYS EARLY INTERVENTION AND BEING ATTENTIVE TO OUR LOVED ONES IS EXTREMELY IMPORTANT.

VO/SOT #2

IN THE UNITED STATES – BETWEEN 50 AND 60-THOUSAND AMERICANS ARE AFFECTED BY FRONTOTEMPORAL DEMENTIA – OR F-T-D – ACCORDING TO THE ALZHEIMER'S ASSOCIATION.

BUT EARLIER THIS MONTH – FORMER TALK SHOW HOST WENDY WILLIAMS' CARE TEAM ANNOUNCED SHE HAS APHASIA AND F-T-D... JUST ONE YEAR AFTER ACTOR BRUCE WILLIS' FAMILY ANNOUNCED HE HAS THE DISEASE... CONTINUING TO BRING F-T-D INTO THE SPOTLIGHT.

TAKE VO

IN MARCH 2022 – WILLIS ANNOUNCED HIS RETIREMENT FROM ACTING DUE TO APHASIA – A

CONDITION WHICH IMPACTS SOMEONE'S ABILITY TO SPEAK AND UNDERSTAND LANGUAGE. HIS FAMILY SAYS HIS CONDITION PROGRESSED – LEADING TO A RECENT DIAGNOSIS OF F-T-D. F-T-D CAUSES PROGRESSIVE NERVE CELL LOSS IN THE FRONTAL AND TEMPORAL LOBES OF THE BRAIN.

THIS LEADS TO A LOSS OF FUNCTION IN THESE BRAIN REGIONS – IMPACTING SOMEONE'S BEHAVIOR..

PERSONALITY.. AND LANGUAGE FUNCTION.

DR. DEEPAK NAIR (NYE-ER) – A NEUROLOGIST WITH OSF HEALTHCARE – SAYS WHILE SOMEONE MAY NOT DIE DIRECTLY FROM F-T-D... IT CAN LEAD TO OTHER HEALTH PROBLEMS THAT DO CAUSE DEATH.

31 SECOND SOT: "It's sort of like what happened in the COVID era. People are talking about 'are the people dying from COVID or with COVID?' Same problem. When people die with dementia, there's a lot of other things that can lead to their death. But the processes of dementia, over time, will start to affect other organ systems. In that sense, any of the known dementias will ultimately lead to death from another reason, though."

VO TAG

DR. DEEPAK CALLS THE BRAIN AND NERVOUS SYSTEM THE “MASTER CONTROL” OVER EVERY OTHER ORGAN SYSTEM.

HE SAYS EARLY INTERVENTION AND BEING ATTENTIVE TO OUR LOVED ONES IS EXTREMELY IMPORTANT.

EXTRA SOTS/INFO

21 SECOND SOT "That timeframe from when they first recognized the aphasia to now, making this diagnosis, is not surprising. Because what that probably suggests is they've seen changes over time in Mr. Willis' function. Not just his language function, but other functions. Enough to say, ok now we meet the criteria for dementia."

"I suspect a lot of neurologists were suspicious that when the Willis family revealed his aphasia diagnosis a year ago, there was probably something more to this. For aphasia to arise suddenly, spontaneously without some acute injury, then you start often thinking about 'Is there some underlying degenerative process?'"