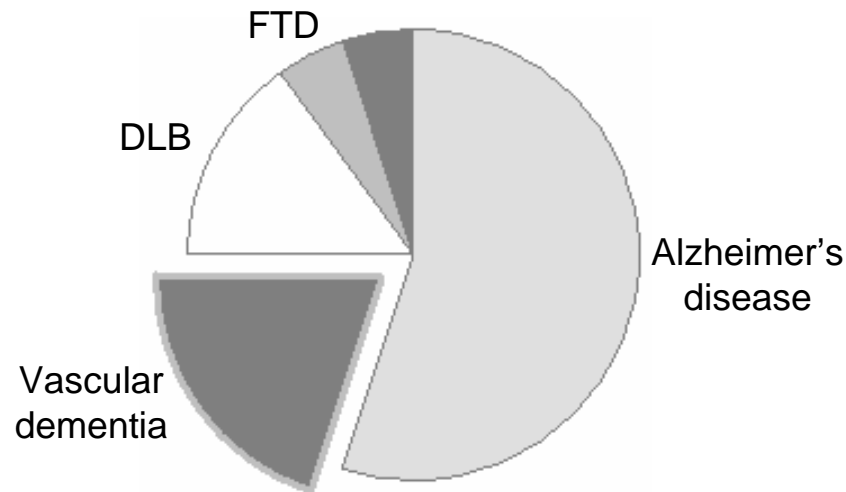


# Hearts and Brains: improving the connection



# What is vascular dementia?

- *“To me, it's like knitting with a knotted ball of wool. Every now and again I come to a knot. I try to unravel it but can't, so I knit the knot in. As time goes by, there are more knots.”*
- VaD is the second most common form of dementia



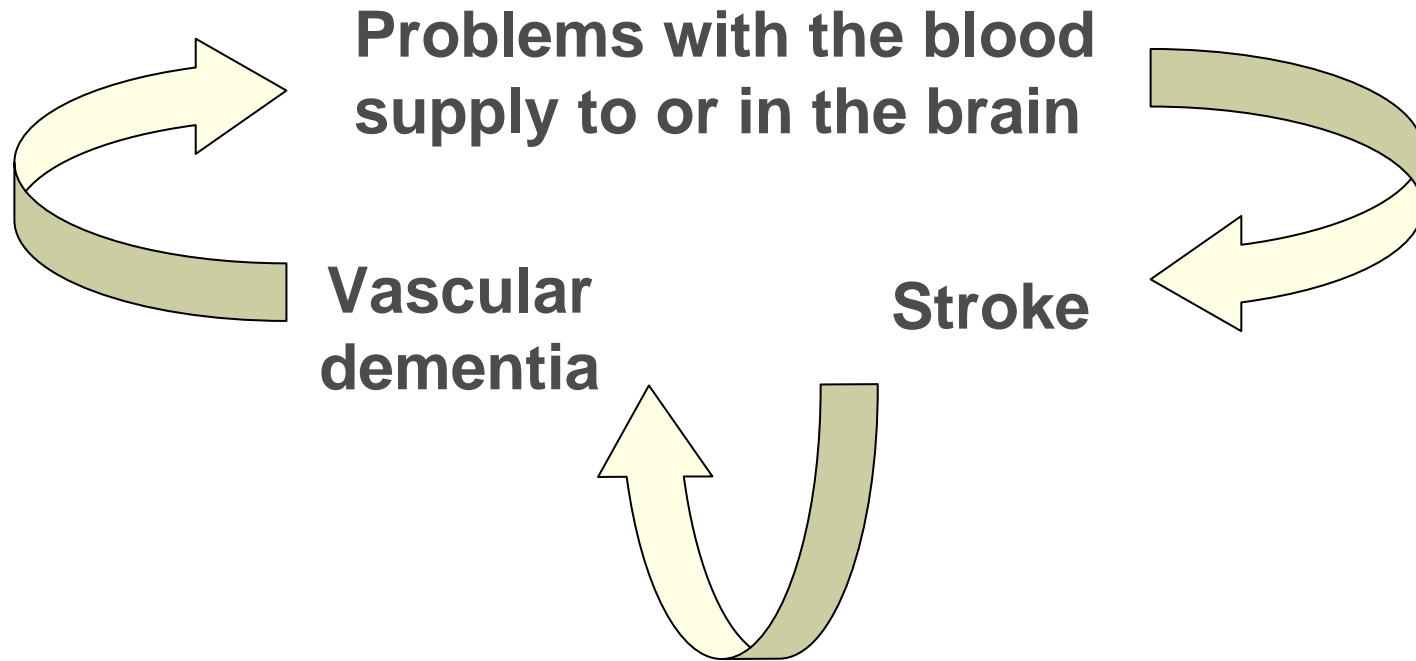
# It is different to Alzheimer's

- Memory problems may not be the first symptom
- Onset and progression may be sudden and stepped
- Person may have greater insight for longer
- Treatment options differ
  - Support for physical and cognitive symptoms may be required
  - There is scope for rehabilitation
  - Secondary prevention could slow progression

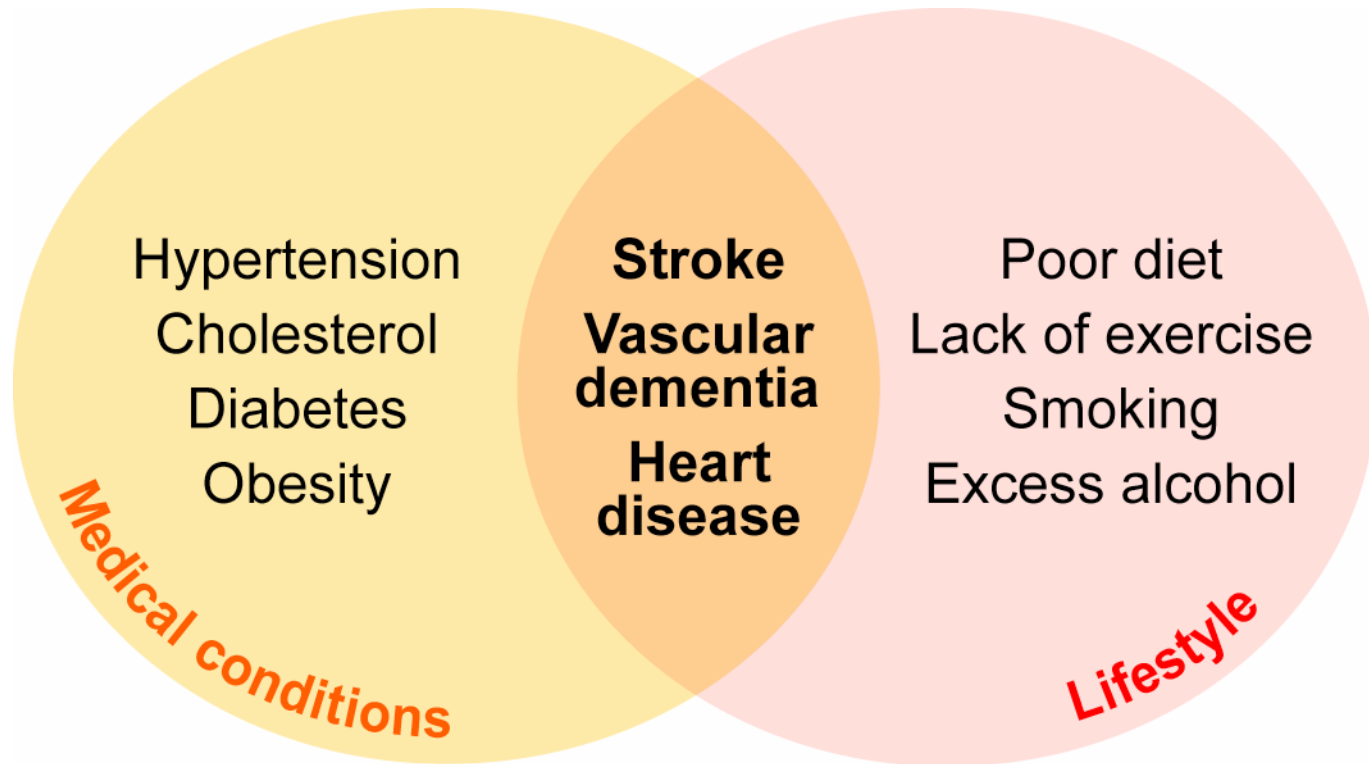
# VaD is linked to stroke

- Some cases of VaD are caused by a single or repeated stroke(s)
- More than 70% develop cognitive decline after stroke
- Up to a third fulfil criteria for dementia three months after stroke
- Nine fold increase in dementia risk for several years after stroke
- People who have dementia are more likely to have a stroke

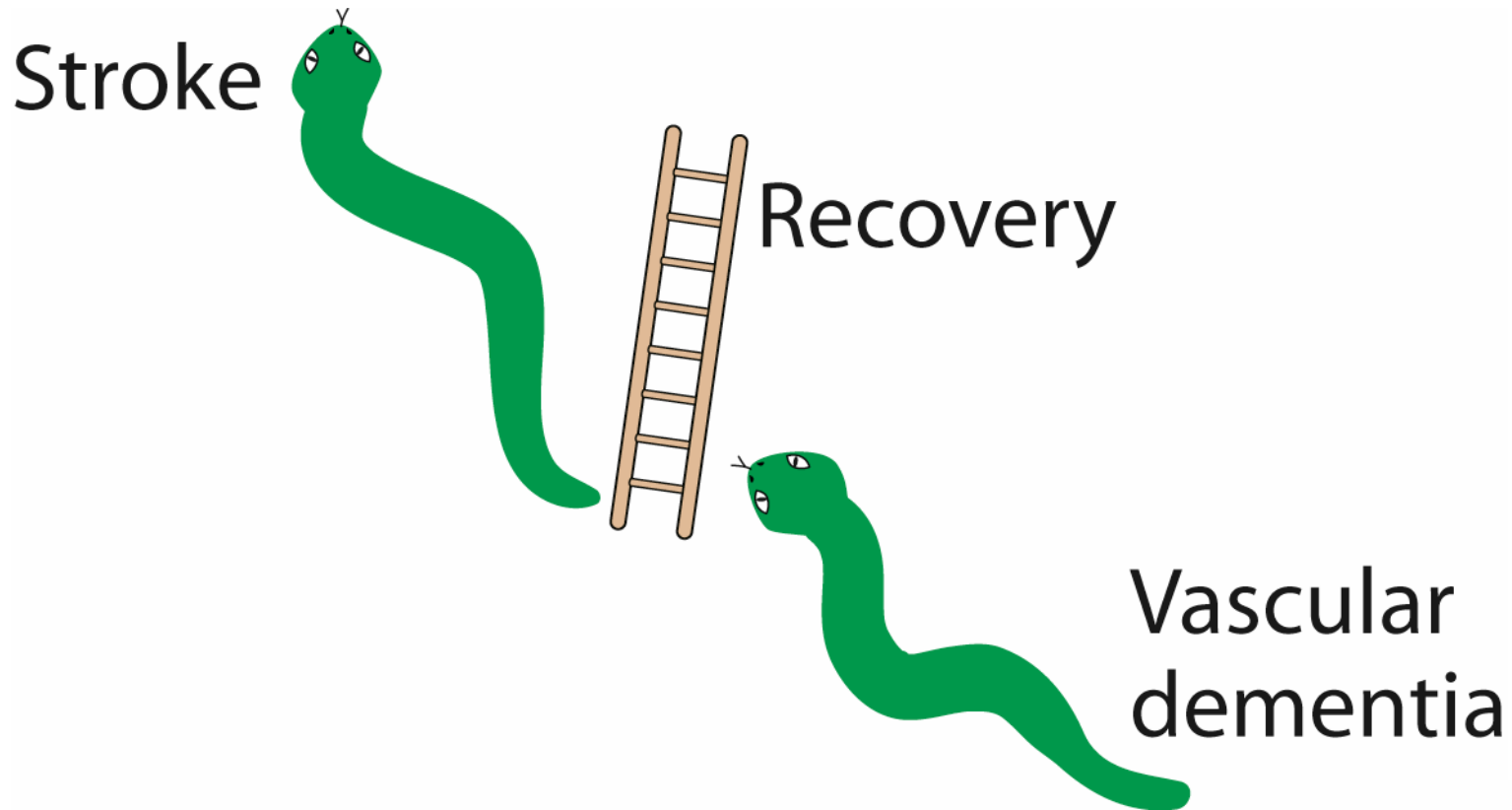
# What happens in the brain?



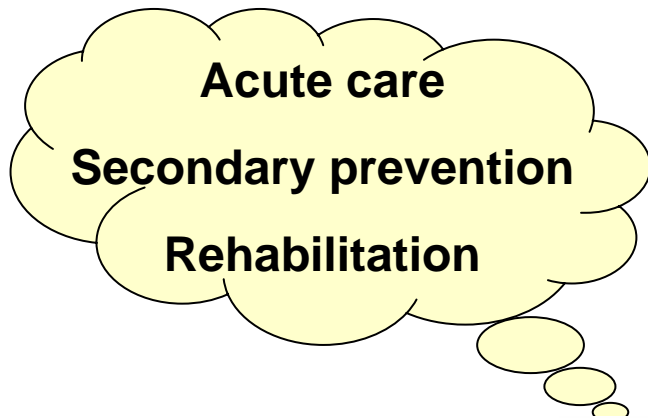
# We can reduce the risk of heart and brain disease



# We can maximize recovery and improve quality of life



# Stroke and dementia: worlds apart



**Stroke  
specialist**



**Dementia  
specialist**



# Breaking down the divide

**Attitudes and awareness**  
**Multi-disciplinary involvement**  
**Assessment tools**  
**Protocols for referrals**  
**Integrated care pathways**  
**Shared research outcomes**



# Encourage healthy aging



- Abbott (2004)
  - $< \frac{1}{4}$  mile = double the risk  $> 2$  miles
- Weuve (2004)
  - 30 mins 5x a wk better on cog tests
- Larsen et al (2006)
  - 15 mins 3x wk = 32% risk ↓
- Rovio et al (2005)
  - 20-30 mins 2x wk = 50-60% risk ↓
  - Took smoking and diet into account

# The 'Hearts and Brains' project

- 3 year project – Sep 2004 to 2007
- Sponsored by the DoH
- Alzheimer's Society, first UK organisation to focus specifically on VaD
- Partnerships set up with important organisations e.g. Stroke Association



# Project achievements and plans

- Distributed over **78,000** publications
- **Tripled** number of VaD calls to **helpline** – 0845 300 0336
- Initiated a **project grant** programme
- Developed a **position paper** on VaD
- Informing professionals through a series of **education seminars** around the UK
- Developing a statement of principles, to summarise best practice, using the **Delphi method**

# Find out more

Sarah Day  
Hearts and Brains  
Project manager  
Alzheimer's Society

020 7306 1179  
sday@alzheimers.org.uk

Joe Korner  
Director of  
Communications  
Stroke Association

020 7566 1506  
jkorner@stroke.org.uk

**[www.alzheimers.org.uk/vascular dementia](http://www.alzheimers.org.uk/vascular dementia)**