

CAPGRAS SYNDROME

A psychological condition where a person irrationally believes someone they know has been replaced by an imposter, which is sometimes known as "Imposter Syndrome". In some cases, they may also believe pets or even inanimate objects are imposters. It is named after Joseph Capgras, a French psychiatrist who, with a colleague, first described the disorder in 1923. It is classified as delusional misidentification syndromes (DMSs).



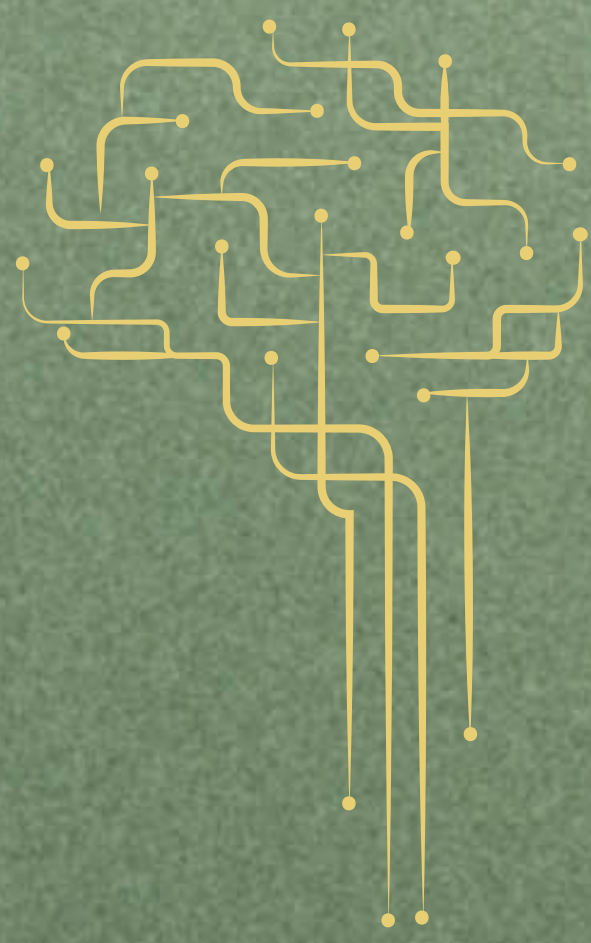
SYMPTOMS



- Unlike other mental health conditions, a person with CS acts normally except around the person or thing they believe is an imposter.
- Delusion - may acknowledge that the "imposter" looks exactly like the "original," but they believe that they can see through the "disguise."
- Leads to additional stress, anger, and arguments between the person affected and those around them.
- May become obsessed with the "imposter" or with finding the "real" person.
- May be violent towards the imposter, but not always the case.
- Anxiety and changes in behavior
- Fear



CAUSES



- Broken connection between central nervous system that scans the features of a face and the extended nervous system that relays emotional information related to that face, prevents normal face recognition - misidentification
- Have one or more lesions (damage in the tissue) on the brain caused by mostly trauma or disease
- Hormonal imbalance - hypothyroidism, or an underactive thyroid gland
- Use large amounts of recreational drugs or alcohol
- Nutrient deficiency - lack of vitamin B12
- Schizophrenia and epilepsy
- Have dementia or Parkinson's

EPIDEMIOLOGY & ETIOLOGY

- Case reports up to 16% from those with Lewy body dementia or Alzheimer's.
- People with schizophrenia and dementia make up 81% of all cases.
- Many people with Capgras syndrome also had other types of delusions.
- People with the condition also tended to be middle-aged, had other mental health issues in the past, and were twice as likely to be women.
- One study about Capgras syndrome used a health database of 250,000 people in the U.K. It found just 84 cases in that large pool.

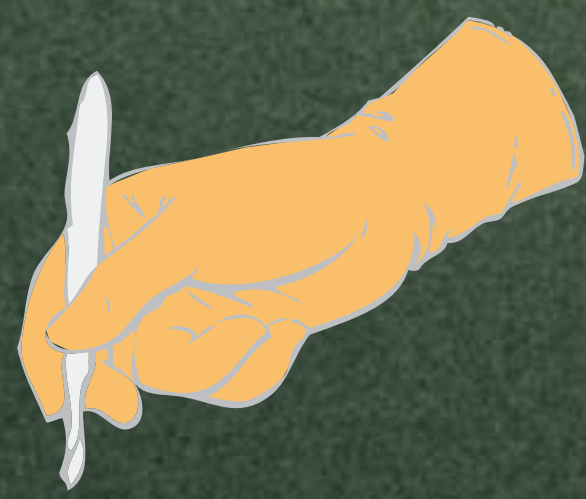
DIAGNOSIS

- Mental skills tests to check for dementia or other conditions.
- Brain imaging tests like MRI or EEG that look for lesions or other brain changes.
- Talking to family members or caregivers to learn when the delusions started.

TREATMENTS



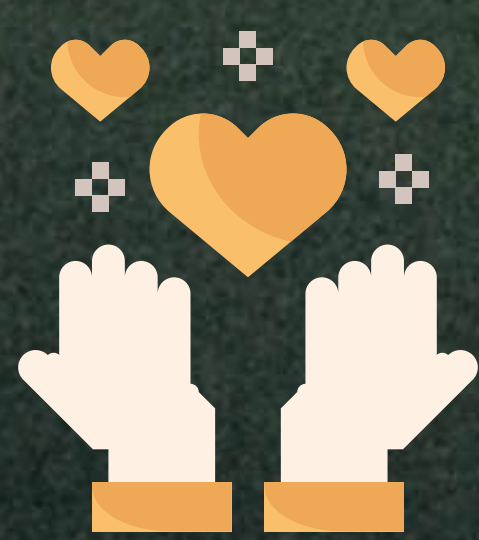
Antipsychotics & Memory and recognition medications



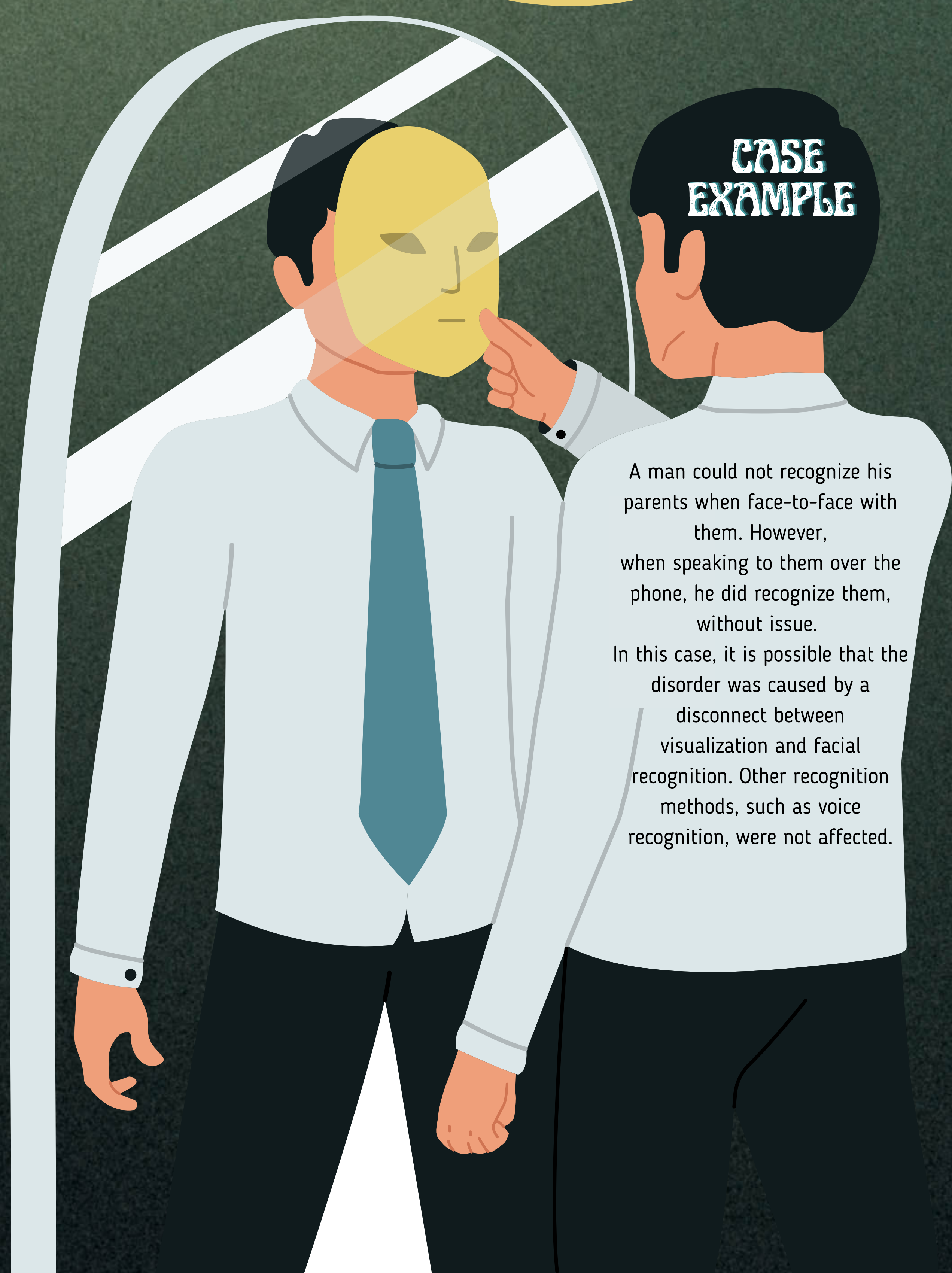
Surgery



Validation Therapy



Caregivers and family members provide a safe and comfortable space free from external stressors



CASE EXAMPLE

A man could not recognize his parents when face-to-face with them. However, when speaking to them over the phone, he did recognize them, without issue. In this case, it is possible that the disorder was caused by a disconnect between visualization and facial recognition. Other recognition methods, such as voice recognition, were not affected.

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The Vagus Project
Neuroscience Foundation

References-

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<https://www.webmd.com/mental-health/impostor-syndrome-capgras>