Progressive supranuclear palsy (PSP), Corticobasal degeneration (CBD) and Tauopathies

Consultant neurologist Dr James Rowe runs a research clinic for patients referred to Addenbrooke’s Hospital with movement disorders such as progressive supranuclear palsy (PSP) and corticobasal degeneration (CBD).

Affecting around 4,000 people in the UK, PSP is a rare condition where increasing numbers of brain cells become damaged over time, causing difficulty with balance, movement, vision, speech and swallowing. Symptoms vary from patient to patient, but will get worse as the disease progresses.

The clinic also carries out research into CBD which, like PSP, causes nerve cell damage which gets more severe over time. Often starting with numbness and loss of use of one hand, CBD can lead to problems controlling one side of the body and difficulties with everyday tasks like tying shoelaces.

The symptoms of PSP and CBD are very similar to those of other neurological conditions, such as Parkinson’s disease or multiple system atrophy. This means they can difficult to diagnose, especially as there is no simple test which our neurologists can carry out. Instead, these conditions are often diagnosed by using MRI or CT scans to rule out other illnesses.

There are currently no cures for PSP or CBD, and no treatment which can stop or slow their progression. If you have one of these disorders, we will invite you to regular appointments with our team so that we can monitor the progression of your condition and help you to manage your symptoms.