Neurological illness can happen to anyone

Famous Faces, Hidden Battles



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Scan to book your appointment

Did you know?

Prime ministers, film stars, cricketers, singers and scientists have all faced **diseases of the brain, nerves and muscles**. Many of them kept working and achieving great things with the right treatment.

How to read this booklet

- On each page, read about the famous people.
- Guess what they have in common.
- The answer is given at the **bottom of the page**.

Why we share these stories

- To remove fear and shame about brain illness
- To show that treatment works
- To encourage people to see a doctor early

All information is taken from what these people or their families have said publicly, or from news reports. It is shared only for awareness.

What do these famous people have in common?

Fatima Sana Shaikh
Actress, *Dangal*

Had her first attack on the sets of *Dangal*. Takes regular medicine, keeps acting, and speaks openly to break myths.

Robin Uthappa
Cricketer, 2007 T20 World Cup winner

Played top-level cricket for India while managing this condition, and now speaks about brain health.

Jonty Rhodes
South African cricket legend

Has lived with it since childhood – and became one of the greatest fielders the game has seen.

Prince
World-famous American singer

Had it as a child and was teased at school – then became a music legend.

Danny Glover
Hollywood actor, *Lethal Weapon*

Had it as a teenager, learnt to recognise the warning signs, and later raised awareness.

The answer

Epilepsy (fits)

About 1 in 100 people have it. With regular medicine, about 7 out of 10 become fit-free. It is a brain condition – not a curse, and not contagious.

What do these famous people have in common?

Atal Bihari Vajpayee
Former Prime Minister of India

In 2009 this illness affected his speech and memory, and he stayed away from public life after that.

Mithun Chakraborty
Actor, *Disco Dancer*

Was rushed to hospital in 2024 with sudden weakness, was treated quickly, and returned to work.

Rahul Roy
Actor, *Aashiqui*

Fell ill in 2020 while shooting in Kargil. Needed speech therapy and physiotherapy to recover.

Tiku Talsania
Actor, *Andaz Apna Apna*

Was taken ill in January 2025 and recovered with treatment.

Sharon Stone
Hollywood actress

In 2001 she had bleeding in the brain. She slowly recovered and returned to acting.

The answer

Stroke (brain attack, paralysis)

Face drooping, arm weakness or slurred speech? Go to a hospital with a CT scan at once – the first 4½ hours matter most. Control BP, sugar and smoking to prevent it.

What do these famous people have in common?

Simone Tata
Built the Lakmé brand

Lived with this condition in her later years and passed away in 2025, aged 95.

Muhammad Ali
World boxing champion

Was diagnosed after retiring – and still lit the Olympic flame in 1996 with shaking hands.

Michael J. Fox
Actor, *Back to the Future*

Was diagnosed at just 29. His foundation has raised huge amounts for research.

Pope John Paul II
Head of the Catholic Church

Carried on his duties for years while living with this illness.

Ozzy Osbourne
Rock singer

Announced it in 2020 and kept making music.

Neil Diamond
Singer and songwriter

Stopped touring in 2018 because of it, but kept singing.

The answer

Parkinson's disease

Shaking hands, stiffness, slowness and small steps are not just 'old age'. Medicines, exercise and physiotherapy help people stay active for many years.

What do these famous people have in common?

George Fernandes
Former Defence Minister of India

Spent his last years with severe loss of memory and passed away in 2019.

Ronald Reagan
President of the USA

Told the world about his illness in a handwritten letter in 1994.

Margaret Thatcher
Prime Minister of the UK

Her daughter wrote about her loss of memory in later life.

Bruce Willis
Hollywood action star

First had trouble finding words; his family announced the diagnosis in 2023.

Sean Connery
The first James Bond

His wife shared that he lost his memory in his final years.

The answer

Dementia (Alzheimer's and memory loss)

Forgetfulness that disturbs daily life is not normal ageing. Some causes – thyroid, vitamin B12, depression – are treatable. Early diagnosis helps the family plan care.

What do these famous people have in common?

Salman Khan
Film superstar

Had severe 'electric-shock' pain in the face for years and was treated with surgery in 2011. He has also spoken about a swelling of a blood vessel in the brain.

Varun Dhawan
Actor

Shared in 2022 that the balance system of his inner ear stopped working well, leaving him feeling off-balance.

Lady Gaga
Singer

Has spoken about severe headaches that stop her from working.

Serena Williams
Tennis champion

Played through severe headaches for years before speaking about them.

The answer

Trigeminal neuralgia (Salman Khan) · Vestibular hypofunction – a balance problem (Varun Dhawan) · Migraine (Lady Gaga, Serena Williams)

Most headaches, face pain and giddiness can be treated. A sudden 'worst-ever' headache needs emergency care.

What do these famous people have in common?

Samantha Ruth Prabhu
Actress

Shared in 2022 that her own immune system was attacking her muscles. Kept acting during treatment.

Stephen Hawking
Scientist

Was diagnosed at 21 and given a few years to live. He lived to 76 and wrote *A Brief History of Time*.

Celine Dion
Singer, *My Heart Will Go On*

Severe muscle stiffness and spasms stopped her concerts – she returned to sing at the 2024 Paris Olympics.

Justin Bieber
Singer

In 2022 one side of his face became paralysed after a virus affected a facial nerve.

Angelina Jolie
Hollywood actress

Had sudden weakness of one side of her face, and recovered.

The answer

Myositis (Samantha) · Motor neuron disease (Hawking) · Stiff person syndrome (Celine Dion) · Ramsay Hunt syndrome (Bieber) · Bell's palsy (Jolie)

Weakness, numbness, face drooping or muscle stiffness need a neurologist. Tests like EMG / NCS find the cause, and many of these are treatable.

What do these famous people have in common?

Abhishek Bachchan
Actor

As a child, letters looked jumbled when he read. With help he finished school and became a star.

Alia Bhatt
Actress

Shared in 2024 that she gets easily distracted and 'zones out' – a psychological test confirmed it.

Fahadh Faasil
Actor, *Pushpa*, *Aavesham*

Was diagnosed at the age of 41, in 2024.

Hrithik Roshan
Actor

As a child he could not speak smoothly. Daily speech practice helped him overcome it.

Elon Musk
Founder of Tesla and SpaceX

Said on television in 2021 that he is on the autism spectrum.

Anthony Hopkins
Oscar-winning actor

Was diagnosed late in life.

The answer

Dyslexia (Abhishek) · ADHD (Alia, Fahadh) · Stammering (Hrithik) · Autism / Asperger's (Musk, Hopkins)

These are differences in how the brain develops – not low intelligence. Early help at home and school lets children shine.

What we learn from them

- Brain illness can happen to **anyone** – rich or poor, young or old.
- It is **not a curse**, a punishment or 'evil eye'.
- **Early diagnosis** and regular treatment make a big difference.
- Never stop medicines on your own.
- Do not hide the illness – talk to your doctor and family.
- Children with learning or attention problems need **help, not punishment**.

Go to hospital at once if you see

- Sudden weakness of face, arm or leg
- Slurred speech or sudden loss of vision
- A fit lasting more than 5 minutes
- A sudden, severe 'worst-ever' headache

Conditions treated at our clinic

- Epilepsy and seizures (fits)
- Stroke and paralysis
- Migraine and frequent headache
- Vertigo, giddiness, loss of balance
- Parkinson's disease, tremor, slowness
- Memory loss, dementia
- Neck and back pain, sciatica, spondylosis
- Numbness, tingling, nerve pain (neuropathy)
- Muscle weakness (myopathy)
- Head injury after an accident
- Sleep problems
- Children: seizures, developmental delay, slow walking or talking

Tests at Narayani Hospital, under one roof

EEG · Video EEG · EMG / NCS · VEP · BERA · VNG (vertigo test) · CT brain · CSF test · All blood tests

Not everyone needs tests. When they are needed, Dr Diwan explains which ones and why.

Appointments

Monday to Saturday · Closed on Sundays

Narayani Hospital

Consultation, tests & admission

Shree Vallabh Nagar, behind Chaan Hotel, near Mumbai Naka, Nashik 422009

Consult 11 am – 3 pm · Tests 10 am – 5 pm

Hospital open 24 hours for emergencies

0253 2224411

Dr Anand Diwan Neurology Clinic

Evening consultation

11 Yashika Plaza, near Satyam Sweet, Govind Nagar, Nashik 422009

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Read more online

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This booklet gives general information and does not replace medical advice. In an emergency, go to the nearest hospital.