

Kono Method practitioners are doctors with a strong desire to understand the wishes of their patients

## Working Together with Patients and Families to Revitalize Their Lives



Doctor Kazuhiko Kono established his clinic in Midori Ward, Nagoya City to provide dementia treatment. Refusing to limit himself to existing thinking and approaches, he has publicly promoted his unique Kono Method and pursues dementia treatment for each of his patients, one by one. The Kono Method revolves around three central pillars: (1) the principle of caregiver protection, (2) the at-home balance method, and (3) effective supplement usage.

### Three pillars of the Kono Method

Just as dementia patients are entitled to their rights and dignity, nursing-care staff entitled to the same, and the Kono Method practice of protecting nursing-care workers in these ways is known as the "principle of caregiver protection." If a short-tempered patient engages in verbal abuse or violence toward their caregivers, the latter will have a hard time coping and gradually be worn down by their experiences, which is why I want to change patients in order to reduce the bur-



den on caregivers. I ask that patients smile and offer up a simple thank-you to those who care for them. By helping patients to calm down and relax, the burden on caregivers is reduced, and in increasing numbers of cases the patients are able to live out their remaining days in their own homes. The Kono Method aims to preserve the patient's dignity and grace through to the end, enabling them to stay bright and optimistic even after dementia sets in, continuing to give thanks and apologize as appropriate and otherwise remain considerate toward others. Our next goal after this is to improve the patient's memory. The Kono Method's second pillar, the "at-home balance method," has the caregiver prepare medicines in accordance with doctor instructions. Dementia causes mood swings in patients: their moods rise and plunge depending on their current physical health, the time of year, and other factors. A doctor cannot stay with a patient 24 hours a day, which is why the patient's family members or caregiving-facility staff must increase and decrease medicine dosages as necessary depending on how upset or calm the patient is, and re-adjust immedi-

ately following changes. In this way, the at-home balance method is like adjusting a pair of weighing scales to maintain good balance in accordance with patient needs. We call this act of adjusting medicine dosages based on symptom fluctuations "symptom surfing." The third pillar of the Kono Method is effective supplement usage. Dementia is considered highly difficult to treat because it cannot be cured through insurance-covered treatment alone. Medicines prescribed under health insurance coverage do not bring about dramatic improvements in dementia, which is why patients must also pursue the use of supplements and similar which are not covered by insurance. I often prescribe a rice-bran-derived supplement that utilizes ferulic acid as its main ingredient. Supplements that use taxifolin extracted from Russian Larix kaempferi, a type of tree commonly known as the Japanese larch, have also been attracting attention as a dementia treatment because taxifolin is effective in reducing brain inflammation and facilitating active oxygen intake. In addition, I have become increas-



  
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ingly interested in dementia treatment methods that use ultrasonic wave devices and similar apparatus.

### Continually learn from the patient

Removing amyloid proteins is the easiest way to treat Alzheimer's disease; the Kono Method, in contrast, aims to improve symptoms related to dementia and help delay the disease's progression in order to give patients more time. Dementia proceeds as if it is an object rolling down an incline, and factors other than brain atrophy alone play a part. I think it's best to provide support by treating epilepsy, depression and other related problems, while enabling patients to receive more of their nursing care at home and thus live out the rest of their natural lifespans, even if they have to take things a bit slower. The Kono Method utilizes approaches not seen in existing medical journals and texts, so examination and diagnosis of patients must involve looking carefully at each person individually and accumulating physical evidence little by little—the patient's physical constitution, personality, home environment and other such factors also play a part in these determinations. Appropriate dosages and tolerances

for medicines are indicated by the patient's body itself, which is why it's important to constantly examine the patient's physical state and continually learn from them personally. The Kono Method exhibits high rates of patient improvement, so I am confident that even if treatment is carried out at another hospital or clinic, improvement rates will remain just as high. Our clinic receives patients from all around Japan, and from other parts of the world as well, with our farthest-traveling patient thus

far coming from Brazil. A Japanese painter living in France even came in for treatment from us. Everyone who comes in us is desperate, looking for an answer. Organizations in China, the United States and other countries have asked us to come give lectures, and a Vancouver, Canada hospital manager once told us, "When I open my new facility in six years, I want to employ the Kono Method from the outset." Our approach seems to be gaining popularity outside Japan as well.

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#### ● Requests for First-time Patients

You are not required to bring a letter of introduction from your doctor. Please provide an accurate and detailed description of which medicines you are taking and their dosages, and indicate any past medicines that have caused side effects. If you are accompanied by another person, make sure it is somebody who is involved in your day-to-day life. If you as the patient are unable to come in person, the person who does come should bring the patient's CT scan results to receive a broad diagnosis and determine a course of treatment. Costs must be paid personally; they are not covered by health insurance. We will introduce you to a Kono Method practitioner in your area.

### Note for the Patient's Family Members

Please note that the Kono Method is based on the opinions of its practitioners, and is not a guaranteed cure or treatment for dementia. The Kono Method is not effective for all patients. If your regular physician suddenly tells you to start following the Kono Method, this may represent a reckless decision on their part, as this method was designed to be of assistance to doctors who do not possess specialized knowledge in the field of dementia—it is not intended as a proposed approach to be taken by specialized doctors in the field. Unquestioning believe in the Kono Method by patients, family members or others may lead to interference with current treatments. Therefore, it is important to first develop a relationship of trust with your regular physician.

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