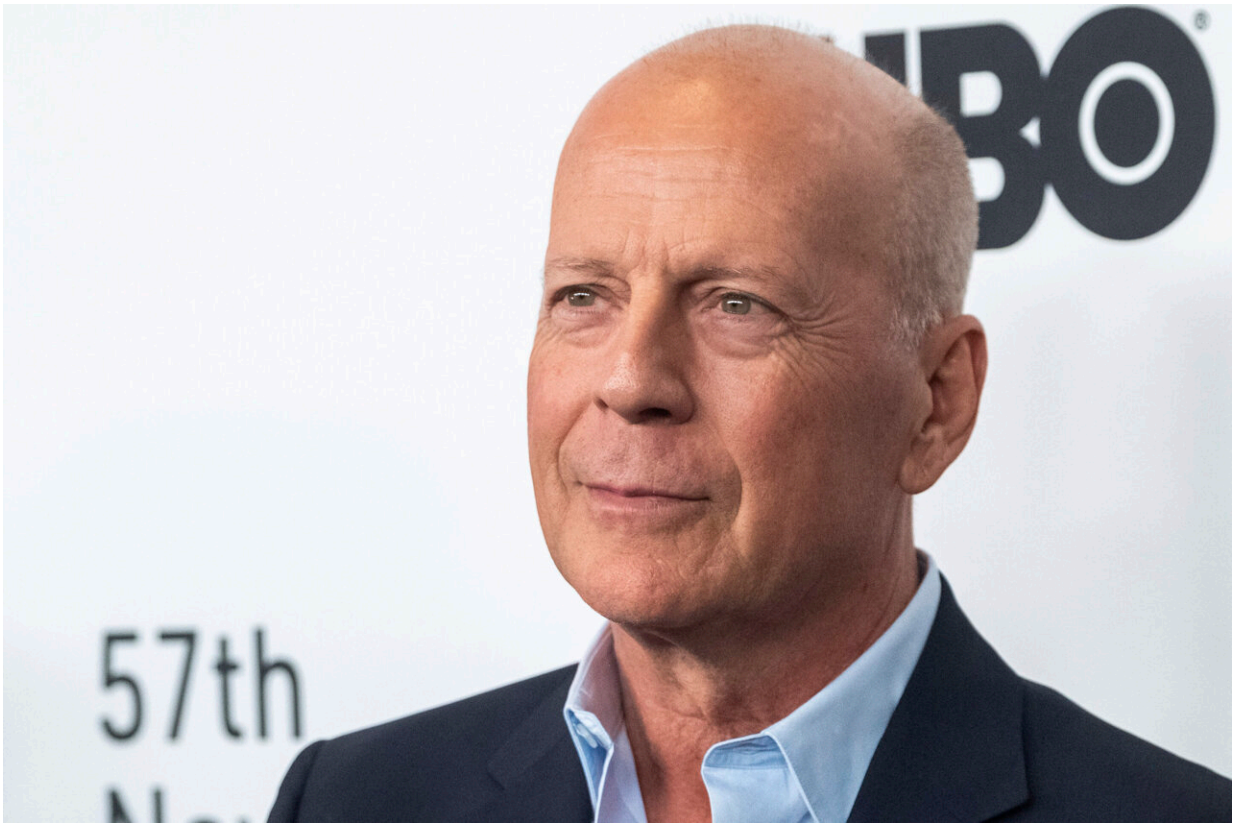


# **Bruce Willis has frontotemporal dementia. What is FTD?**

February 17 2023, by The Associated Press

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Bruce Willis attends a movie premiere in New York on Friday, Oct. 11, 2019. Nearly a year after Bruce Willis' family announced that he would step away from acting after being diagnosed with aphasia, his family says his "condition has progressed." In a statement posted Thursday, the 67-year-old actor's family said Willis has a more specific diagnosis of frontotemporal dementia. Credit: Photo by Charles Sykes/Invision/AP, File

Bruce Willis' family has announced that he has been diagnosed with frontotemporal dementia.

The announcement Thursday came about a year after his family said that Willis would step away from acting after being diagnosed with aphasia, a brain disorder that leads to speaking, reading and writing problems.

Here's some details on the condition:

## **WHAT IS FRONTOTEMPORAL DEMENTIA?**

There are different types of dementia, and [the frontotemporal form](#) affects regions in the front and sides of the brain. Because it causes problems with behavior and language, aphasia can be a [symptom](#).

It's caused by damage to neurons, the brain's information carriers, but the underlying reasons for a particular case are often unclear. People with a family history of the condition are more likely to develop it. It's rare and tends to happen at a younger age than other forms of dementia, between ages 45 and 65.

The terms frontotemporal disorders and frontotemporal dementia are sometimes shortened to FTD.

## **WHAT ARE OTHER SYMPTOMS OF FTD?**

Symptoms can include [emotional problems](#) and physical difficulties, such as trouble walking. Symptoms tend to worsen over time, though progression varies by person.

The statement from the actor's family said [communication problems](#) "are just one symptom of the disease Bruce faces."

## CAN FTD BE TREATED?

There are no treatments to slow or stop the disease, but some interventions can help [manage symptoms](#).

Some patients receive antidepressants or drugs for Parkinson's, which has some overlapping symptoms with [frontotemporal dementia](#). Many also work with speech therapists to manage communication difficulties and [physical therapists](#) to try to improve movement.

People with the condition are more likely to have complications from things like falls, injuries or infections. The [average life expectancy](#) after symptoms emerge is seven to 13 years, [according to researchers](#).

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