

Cognitive Impairment

Setting: **Inpatient** Population: **Adult** Keywords: **orientation, memory, problem-solving, thought**

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Clinical Description

Care of the hospitalized patient experiencing impairment related to cognitive skills that include attention, memory, orientation, judgment, reasoning, problem-solving and executive functioning with reasonable potential for improvement.

Key Information

- Language and culture may affect results of standardized assessment tools. Choose tools appropriate for the patient to provide the most accurate cognitive assessment.
 - Hospitalization and illness stress cognitive abilities and exacerbate dysfunctional behaviors.
 - It is important to identify and address safety concerns related to cognitive dysfunction, such as medication adherence, decision-making capacity, safety with functional mobility tasks and wandering.
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Clinical Goals

By transition of care

A. The patient will demonstrate achievement of the following goals:

- Optimal Functional Independence

B. Patient, family or significant other will teach back or demonstrate education topics and points:

- Education: Overview
 - Education: Self Management
 - Education: When to Seek Medical Attention
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Correlate Health Status

Correlate health status to:

- history, comorbidity
 - age, developmental level
 - sex, gender identity
 - baseline assessment data
 - physiologic status
 - response to medication and interventions
 - psychosocial status, social determinants of health
 - barriers to accessing care and services
 - health literacy
 - cultural and spiritual preferences
 - safety risks
 - family interaction
 - plan for transition of care
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Cognitive Impairment

Signs/Symptoms/Presentation

- aggression
- agitation
- concentration poor
- confusion
- crying
- difficulty learning or following instructions
- disorientation
- distractibility
- fatigue
- forgetfulness
- impulsive behavior
- inappropriate behavior
- judgment impaired
- labile mood
- lack of awareness of present events

- problem-solving ability altered
- speech difficulty

Diagnostic Results

- imaging study abnormalities

Problem Intervention(s)

Optimize Cognitive Function

- Assess cognitive function using a standardized tool to establish baseline and identify areas of deficit.
- Establish rapport and trust; utilize unhurried and calm approach.
- Utilize clear communication; address patient by name, speak slowly with simple directions and gestures; provide time for patient response, listen carefully and maintain eye contact.
- Refrain from correcting or contradicting the patient's perception for optimal interaction.
- Promote a safe and calm environment (e.g., supervision, assistance); avoid sensory overload or deprivation.
- Promote use of personal vision and auditory aids; provide orientation cues (e.g., calendar, clock, pictures).
- Establish familiarity using a structured routine congruent with home schedule, when possible, to decrease risk of confusion and agitation (e.g., family presence, consistent caregiver, sleep and meal schedule, toileting schedule).
- Encourage multimodal physical activity, exercise and complementary interventions, such as mindfulness, meditation, yoga and tai chi; consider combined exercise and cognitive activity.
- Facilitate participation in activities, such as word games, discussion of current events and reminiscing to stimulate cognitive function and promote enjoyment.
- Implement cognitive remediation or restorative techniques, such as training in direct attention, occupation, activity-based and functional communication strategies.

Associated Documentation

- Environment Familiarity/Consistency
- Reorientation Measures
- Self-Care Promotion
- Sensory Stimulation Regulation

General Education

- admission, transition of care
 - orientation to care setting, routine
 - advance care planning
 - diagnostic tests/procedures
 - opioid medication management
 - oral health
 - medication management
 - pain assessment process
 - safe medication disposal
 - tobacco use, smoke exposure
 - treatment plan
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Safety Education

- call light use
 - equipment/home supplies
 - fall prevention
 - harm prevention
 - infection prevention
 - MDRO (multidrug-resistant organism) care
 - personal health information
 - resources for support
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Education: Overview

- description
 - signs/symptoms
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Education: Self Management

- activity
 - assistive/adaptive devices
 - cognitive support measures
 - home safety
 - prevent skin breakdown
 - provider follow-up
 - rehabilitation therapy
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Education: When to Seek Medical Attention

- unresolved/worsening symptoms
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