

Mild Cognitive Impairment (MCI)

Information for patients and families

What is mild cognitive impairment (MCI)?

MCI is diagnosed when a person's trouble with memory, thinking or language is greater than average for their age. People with MCI have trouble with their cognitive function but can still do their regular daily activities.

Why is it important to diagnose MCI?

People with MCI have a higher chance of developing a neurodegenerative disease such as Alzheimer's disease, Lewy body disease or frontotemporal dementia.

When people have short-term memory problems, it is known as **amnesic MCI**. Every year, 10 to 15 people out of 100 people with amnesic MCI will develop Alzheimer's disease. This means that people with amnesic MCI are 3 to 4 times more likely to develop Alzheimer's disease than people without amnesic MCI.

When people don't have short-term memory problems (amnesic MCI), there is less information about how likely they are to get Alzheimer's disease.



What are the symptoms?

People with amnesic MCI usually have ongoing trouble with their short-term memory.

For example, they might:

- forget things more often (like who they talked to or what they planned to do)
- repeat themselves
- ask the same questions over and over again

Even though people with amnesic MCI have this trouble, they can still do their regular daily activities. This is what makes amnesic MCI different from Alzheimer's disease.

What causes MCI?

MCI may be caused by a variety of neurodegenerative diseases including Alzheimer's disease, Lewy body disease, as well as strokes, nutritional or metabolic disorders and psychiatric (mental) disorders.



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