

University Health Network Memory Clinic



Information for people worried about changes in their memory, thinking or personality, or changes in someone they care about

Learn about:

- the signs of brain changes
- how the UHN Memory Clinic can help
- how to prepare for your appointment
- contact information for the clinic

Krembil Neuroscience Program



Patient Education



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As we get older, many of us notice some changes in how well we remember, think, or speak. Changes in our brains can affect how well we do our daily activities.

If these changes are causing you or someone you care about to have trouble doing their usual activities, you should speak to your doctor.

What are the signs of brain changes?

Some of the signs of changes in your brain may include:

- having trouble doing daily activities or regular tasks at work
- trouble with short-term memory, like:
 - needing more reminders
 - forgetting recent conversations
 - asking the same question over and over again
 - forgetting appointments, special occasions, and/or forgetting to take regular medicines
 - often misplacing things such as keys or a wallet
- trouble finding the right word to use or forgetting what you were going to say in the middle of a sentence
- having trouble looking after finances (for example: writing cheques, banking or investing money)
- getting lost in familiar areas
- changes in personality that may include feeling:
 - sad more often
 - irritated more easily
 - less interested in things you usually enjoy
 - becoming inappropriate in social situations

What can I do if I or a loved one shows these signs?

There are treatments for cognitive changes (trouble remembering, thinking, or speaking). If you or someone you know shows signs of cognitive changes, please see a doctor. They may refer you to a clinic like the UHN Memory Clinic.

What is the UHN Memory Clinic?

The UHN Memory Clinic at Toronto Western Hospital is a special service for people with cognitive changes. The Ontario Health Insurance Plan (OHIP) covers the costs of services that the clinic provides.

A doctor needs to refer you to the clinic. The contact information your doctor needs is at the end of this brochure.

How can the UHN Memory Clinic help?

The UHN Memory Clinic has a team of health care professionals that can help by:

- diagnosing and treating cognitive changes
- providing on-going monitoring and care
- providing information and support to help you understand and cope with cognitive changes

Our team includes:

A geriatric psychiatrist: a doctor trained to diagnose and treat cognitive changes in older adults.

A geriatrician: a doctor specially trained to care for older adults.

A behavioural neurologist: a doctor trained to care for people with cognitive changes and dementia.

A social worker: a health care professional trained to help people and their loved ones cope with cognitive changes. They can provide support and information about other resources.

An occupational therapist: a health care professional that can help people improve their ability to do daily life and work activities.

A nurse: a health care professional that can help check for cognitive changes and teach people about medicines and lifestyle changes that can improve brain health.

What happens at the first appointment?

- You meet with many members of the health care team.
- You have some tests that may include cognitive, physical and neurological (brain function) tests.
- The family member or friend who comes in with you will also meet with the doctors and the social worker.

The appointment usually lasts about 2 hours.

What should I bring?

- a family member or friend who knows about your cognitive changes and can talk to the health care team about them
- all of the medicines you are taking now, including:
 - prescription
 - non-prescription
 - vitamins
 - any natural or herbal products

- your glasses, hearing aid, walker or anything else that helps you see, hear or move around, if you need them
- copies of any X-rays (CT or MRI) of your brain (ask the doctor who referred you to the clinic about this)
- your Ontario Health (OHIP) card

What happens after the first appointment?

We will arrange a follow-up visit to talk about a diagnosis and a plan for your care. If you need them, we will make other appointments to help us manage your care.

If you choose, you can take part in research studies, including clinical drug trials (for example, to see how well a medicine can treat a cognitive change).

How can my doctor make a referral?

Your family doctor or a specialist can refer you to the clinic. You can find the referral on the UHN website: www.uhn.ca. Search for [Memory Clinic](#).

UHN Memory Clinic

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