The Mini-Cog Assessment Instrument for Dementia

Another brief screen for cognitive impairment is the Mini-Cog. It takes approximately 3 minutes to administer. It has minimal language content, which reduces cultural and educational bias. The Mini-Cog combines a 3-item recall component with a Clock Drawing Test (CDT).

**Administration**

*Note: A clock should not be within the patient’s view when administering this test.*

1. Make sure you have the patient’s attention. Instruct the patient to listen carefully to and remember 3 unrelated words and then to repeat the words back to you, so you will know they heard the words correctly.

2. Instruct the patient to draw the face of a clock, either on a blank sheet of paper or on a sheet with the clock circle already drawn on it. After the patient puts the numbers on the clock face, ask him or her to draw the hands of the clock to read a specific time (11:10 or 8:20 are most commonly used and are more sensitive than some others).

   These steps can be repeated, but no additional instructions should be given. If the patient cannot complete the CDT within 3 minutes, move on to the next step.

3. Ask the patient to repeat the 3 previously presented words (See step 1).

**Scoring**

*Recall*

A score of 0 to 3 is given for the recall test. A point is given for each recalled word after the CDT distracter.

*Clock Drawing Test (CDT)*

A score of 0 or 2 is given for the CDT test. Two points are given for a normal CDT. No points are given for an abnormal CDT. For a normal CDT, all numbers must be depicted, in the correct sequence and position, and the hands must readably display the requested time.

*Mini-Cog Score*

To obtain the mini-cog score, add the recall and CDT scores.

0-2 indicates positive screen for dementia.

3-5 indicates negative screen for dementia.


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