

TOPIC:

Cognition After Stroke



Cognition After Stroke



- Cognition refers to how a person thinks and understands and can include:
 - Attention
 - Orientation
 - Memory
 - Insight
 - Impulse control
- Cognitive changes can occur due to damage to the brain
- As many as 2/3 of persons with stroke experience cognitive changes

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What you should know:

- ✓ Changes to cognition are less visible than physical changes
- ✓ Cognitive changes can affect safety and quality of life.
- ✓ People may:
 - have difficulty remembering recent or past event
 - be easily distracted and need more time to think things through
 - have difficulty recognizing their limitations and abilities
 - act quickly without thinking

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- ✓ Cognitive changes can cause distress, impact mood, lead to frustration and affect daily activities
- ✓ Persons with cognitive changes function better with a structured routine that includes tasks that are meaningful to them

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Smart Tips:

Your Approach as a Health Care Provider



- Be patient
- Speak slowly and clearly
- Provide extra time
- Make eye contact
- Help the person establish a routine
- Confirm that the person understands
- Include the family in care

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Provide Guidance for Task Completion



- Give short and simple instructions
- Help the person start the task
- Focus on one activity at a time
- Encourage the person to slow down
- Repeat information and redirect

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Be Aware of the Person's Abilities



- Get to know the person and their abilities
- Gently remind the person of their current abilities and limitations
- Make sure the person is ready to participate
- Supervise as necessary

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Environment



- Minimize noise and distractions
- Encourage the use of aids
- Post reminders to promote safety
- Help make the environment safe
- Help personalize their room
- Use labels/signs to help organize

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Seek extra support

- ✓ Cognition should be monitored to understand the person's abilities and develop a personalized care plan
- ✓ If you notice a sudden change in cognition, report it to your team immediately
- ✓ Occupational Therapists are skilled in cognition

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