

Directives for patients with mild cognitive impairment (MCI) and their relatives

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Introduction

People over 65 or 70 frequently suffer from loss of memory with names and recent events. The impaired working memory is a typical sign of mild cognitive impairment (MCI). Semantic and episodic (long term) memories are usually intact before an Alzheimer disease most of the time slowly declares itself. As no effective treatment is available, and in order to stem this evolution, we can recommend some useful and validated^{1,2} measures with a list of instructions clearly grouped in an ACRONYM to be put into practice by the patient, relatives and medical staff. We suggest DIRECTIVES with each letter corresponding to a guideline easy to learn and to respect.

D- Diet, healthy food³ with antioxidant properties such as vegetables, berries, shell-fruit,⁴ oily fish, maximum 10 glasses of wine (red if possible) per week, no smoking, no drugs, avoiding pollution; regular check-ups for blood pressure, weight, glucose and cholesterol level in the blood; screening for sleep apnea, lack of sleep, controlling the use of hypnotics and sedatives.

I- Intellectual activities such as listening to the daily news and to music, reading and writing every

day, computer chess, videogames, foreign language learning, using the internet.

R- Rehabilitation of memory: learning every day something new, writing it in a book (notebook or digital tablet), remembering TV programs, movies or people met recently, old songs, prayers; crosswords, sudoku, scrabble, card games. In more serious disorders, weekly rehabilitation with a neuropsychologist or a speech therapist is recommended.

E- Exercising⁵ the body: daily gym, walks (30 minutes at least every day), going up the stairs, gardening, shopping, dancing, cooking, tidying up, visiting art galleries and museums.

C- Civility with others (avoiding loneliness), keeping appointments, meeting family members and friends, communicating as much as possible by phone, videoconferences, letters and emails.

T- Transmitting emergency signals by beepers in case of people living alone or who could fall, faint or get lost in the street or even ripped off or mugged

I- Initiative taking with a minimum of help when dressing, preparing meals, going shopping, buying presents, traveling, giving affection and caring for others, enjoying sex.

V- **Visual** and hearing accuracy tested on a yearly basis with corrective measures in case required.

E-**Evaluation** of the memory and executive functions by regular tests carried out by a professional neuropsychologist to determine the living space and care program.

S -**Stress** to be minimized. The person concerned must be in complete harmony with people showing patience and understanding when the given instructions are forgotten and need to be repeated.

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Conflicts of interest

Authors declare that there is no conflict of interest.

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