



# Cognitive function

## Exam to assess mental status



A number of tests can assess cognitive impairment.

More than one test conducted by health care providers should always be used for a more accurate result. A common one used is called “Mini-Mental State Examination.”

It was written by  
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Adapted from this  
examination are  
the questions that  
follow.

QUESTIONS & TASKS	SCORE
<p>1. These questions test for orientation to time and place. Give 1 point for each correct answer.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What year is it?</li> <li>• What season is it?</li> <li>• What is today's date?</li> <li>• What day is it?</li> <li>• What month is it?</li> <li>• What state are you in?</li> <li>• What country are you in?</li> <li>• What city or town are you in?</li> <li>• What place (home, building, etc.) are you in?</li> <li>• What room are you in or what floor are you on in this place?</li> </ul>	<input type="text"/> out of 1 <input type="text"/> out of 1
<p>2. This part tests instant recall. (These things will be asked to be recalled later.)</p> <p>Give 1 point for each object named.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Name 3 objects (e.g. apple, table, dime.) Take 1 second to name each object. Have the person repeat the 3 objects named.</li> </ul>	<input type="text"/> out of 3
<p>3. This part of the exam tests for attention and calculation skills. Give 1 point for each correct answer.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Count backwards from the number 100 by 7s. Do this for 5 numbers. (Answer: 93, 86, 79, 72, and 65.)</li> <li>• Another option is to spell the word WORLD backwards. (Answer: D L R O W.)</li> </ul>	<input type="text"/> out of 5
<p>4. This part tests for recall. Give 1 point for each object named.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ask for the 3 objects stated in step 2 (i.e., apple, table, dime).</li> </ul>	<input type="text"/> out of 3
<p>5. This part tests for language skills. Give 1 point for each correct answer.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Point to a pencil or pen. Ask the person to name it.</li> <li>• Point to a wristwatch or clock. Ask the person to name it.</li> <li>• Ask the person to repeat this phrase "No ifs, ands, or buts".</li> <li>• Ask the person to do these 3 things:           <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Take a piece of paper in your right hand.</li> <li>– Fold the paper in half.</li> <li>– Put the paper on the floor.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Write CLOSE YOUR EYES in large letters on a piece of paper.</li> <li>• Ask the person to read the phrase and to do what it says.</li> <li>• Give the person a pen or pencil and a piece of paper. Tell him or her to write a sentence with a subject and an object. It's okay if words are not spelled correctly.</li> <li>• Give this design on a piece of paper to the person. Tell the person to copy it on the same piece of paper.</li> </ul>	<input type="text"/> out of 1 <input type="text"/> out of 1
	<b>TOTAL:</b> <input type="text"/> out of 30
<p>In general, a score of 24 or less for persons with 12 or more years of schooling and 20 or less for persons with 4 or fewer years of schooling may mean a cognitive problem. Check, though, with a health care provider. A more complete assessment would likely be done to check for cognitive impairment and dementia.</p>	