Assessing cognition after stroke

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Why assess cognition?

Walking and talking
Learning new skills
Interpersonal relationships
Driving, kitchen safety
Progress in rehabilitation
Adapting to new situations
Managing personal finances
Going back to work
...

Stroke – specific cognitive problems?

(Post stroke) vascular dementia?

Mild cognitive impairments?

The picture in clinical practice can be quite muddled.

Which problems are new?

Which problems are stroke specific?
Stroke – specific cognitive problems?

(Post stroke) vascular dementia?

Mild cognitive impairments?
OVERVIEW - Stroke Specific

OCS
Oxford Cognitive Screen

OCS-BRIDGE
Perform a full medical assessment of the person with stroke, including cognition (attention, memory, spatial awareness, apraxia, perception)
Actual Clinical Practice

No efficient purpose built tool for acute patients:
  Long domain specific assessments not practical
  Short screens exist, but were made for dementia:
    MMSE     ACE-R / ACE-III     MOCA

They give a single score (e.g. 24/30)

COGNITION
  PASS / FAIL
However:

Dementia cognitive profile ≠

Stroke cognitive profile

Still Pass / Fail cognition

Neglect contaminates tasks

Heavily language dependent
Short cognitive screening tool

Stroke specific
Aphasia Friendly
Neglect Friendly
5 cognitive domains
- Language
- Attention (spatial & executive)
- Number
- Memory
- Praxis
OCS vs MoCA conclusions

Domain-specific versus generalized cognitive screening in acute stroke

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**OCS** more sensitive than MoCA

**OCS** assesses stroke specific impairments not assessed in MoCA

**OCS** inclusive for patients with aphasia & neglect

**OCS** provides a domain overview instead of PASS / FAIL cognition
“OCS fills a critical and necessary brief in assessing cognition after stroke (NICE guidelines)”

Demeyere et al., Psychological Assessment, 2015

OCS licensed to 209 stroke units.
Assessment of Attention

Executive Control

Attentional control mechanisms

Selective & sustained attention

Temporal dynamics and its behavioural correlates

Rachel King

Nir Shalev
Assessing Cognition?

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Mild Cognitive Impairments

Tablet based sensitive assessments for Mild Cognitive Impairments and Dementia (emphasis on process & strategy)
Assessing Mental Capacity

Decision making ability after stroke within legal framework of the Mental Capacity Act

(e.g. capacity to decide discharge destination)
Thank you!