



DEMENTIA NEWSLETTER *for* PHYSICIANS

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Should the Elderly Be Screened for Cognitive Impairment?

Screening for asymptomatic conditions such as early cognitive impairment is justifiable if the condition is common (prevalence in those over 65: dementia = 8%, mild cognitive impairment = 10%), important (the most feared condition of seniors and their families), costly (annual costs are approximately 10 billion dollars), and if intervention is possible (cholinesterase inhibitors –and Memantine/Ebixa).



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The condition being screened for must have a high prevalence or there will be many false positives. An individual's risk of cognitive impairment can be calculated by the following table (remember the rule of **DOUBLING**): (age/family history/vascular risk factors).

Risk Calculator

Each 5 year increment in age DOUBLES the risk

65	2%
70	4%
75	8%
80	16%
85	32%

Each 1° RELATIVE with dementia DOUBLES the risk

Each vascular risk factor DOUBLES the risk (↑ BP, DM, hyperlipidemia, smoking, atrial fibrillation etc.)

Other situations to consider screening would be seniors who have relocated to residential care (prevalence 30-40%), follow up of delirium, follow up of first onset depression after the age of 65 and follow up of stroke. In general if the expected prevalence of cognitive impairment in an individual is over 15-20%, screening is justifiable. If screening for cognitive impairment is positive it is important to proceed to comprehensive assessment to determine if dementia is present. The benefits of "early" diagnosis and treatment of dementia are multiple:

Social	Medical
Social/financial planning	Reversible cause/component
Early caregiver education	Risk factor treatment
Safety: compliance, driving, cooking	Compliance strategies
Advance directives planning	AChEI treatment
Right/Need to know	Crisis avoidance

One method of screening is to use a caregiver or informant questionnaire (if two or more questions are answered yes, screening is positive):

- Does he/she repeat himself/herself or ask the same question over and over?
- Is he/she more forgetful, that is, have trouble with short-term memory?
- Has he/she become irritable, agitated or suspicious or started seeing, hearing, or believing things that aren't real?
- Are there concerns about his/her driving, for example, getting lost or driving unsafely? (Mundt JC – J of Gerontology: Psych Sci 2000 vol 55B #3: 163-170.)

How should you screen?

The Dementia Quickscreen is four simple tests which will take less than 2 minutes to administer to an individual:

The odds ratio for incorrect year is 37. The odds ratio for only 0 or 1 correct on three item recall is 3.1 (2 correct answers score as normal). The odds ratio for abnormal clock drawing is 24 (minor spacing irregularities of the numbers are scored as normal). Naming less than 15 four-legged animals in one minute increases the risk 20 times for dementia (sensitivity .88, specificity .96).

In recognition of January 2006 National Alzheimer Awareness Month, we've enclosed a pad of clock drawing and caregiver questionnaire forms that can be left in your Waiting Room and used by your patients to self-screen for cognitive impairment. If screening is positive you can either refer for further specialized assessment or preferably do a first level cognitive assessment in your office. If you are interested in further education, specialists can come to your office and do a breakfast and learn or lunch and learn program tailored to your learning needs. To find out more information, please call: (613) 523-4004.

REMINYL ER Announcement

Janssen-Ortho announces that REMINYL ER (extended release) tablets will now be reimbursed through the Ontario Drug Benefit program of the Ministry of Health effective **January 12, 2006**.

Community Resources for Persons with Dementia and their Family Caregiver

By Marg Eisner, Director Family Support & Education, Alzheimer Society of Ottawa

Once you have made a diagnosis of dementia, your patients and their family caregivers will require a wide range of programs and services in order to support them throughout the continuum of the disease. The on-going assessment, pharmacological treatment, and management of associated problems and issues of the patient with dementia is increasingly complex because of the many cognitive, behavioural, psychiatric and physical changes that occur over the course of the disease. In addition, the family caregiver will require psychological support, education about the disease, and assistance in mobilizing caregivers' support systems in order to maintain their required caregiving role. Physicians need to know where to turn for help.

First Link program is designed to assist the Family Physician from the point of diagnosis by providing easy access for patients and family members to education, services and support. Contact the Alzheimer Society at: Ottawa: 613-523-4004; Renfrew County: 613-732-1159; Eastern Counties: 613-932-4914

Homemaking and home maintenance:

The Ottawa Community Support Coalition consists of 19 organizations mandated to provide home-based community support services to seniors and adults with physical disabilities living in their community. The range of services offered includes *Meals on Wheels, Diners Club, Friendly Home Visiting, Caregiver Support, Foot Care, and Homemaking*. For further information on Ottawa resources:

www.communitysupportottawa.ca; Eastern Counties: 1-800-267-1741 or 1-800-267-0853; Renfrew County: www.refrewcountyhealth.ca

Personal care and respite: The Community Care Access Centre provides case management, in-home nursing, personal support, specialized consultation services such as occupational therapy and physiotherapy, co-ordination of respite (day programs, in-home respite, short-stay respite) and placement into long-term care homes. In Ottawa: 613-745-5525; Renfrew County: 613-732-7007; Eastern Counties: 1-800-267-0852.

Dementia specific counseling and on-going case management: Geriatric Psychiatry Community Services of Ottawa (613-562-9777) provides a range of services using an inter-disciplinary approach which includes assessment, counseling, referrals to other agencies, educational resources, psychotherapy and case management in geriatric psychiatry and Alzheimer Disease and related dementias. Psychogeriatric services: Eastern Counties: 613-932-9940 or 613-746-4621; Renfrew County: 613-735-6500 or 1-877-260-0535

Support, information and education:

The Alzheimer Society provides support for both the person with dementia and their family member by offering: one-on-one support, peer support groups, education, resource material and referrals to community agencies. The manual, *A Family Guide to Dementia Care*, is a current, informational resource which is available for purchase or on line at: www.alzheimerott.org. Contact the Alzheimer Society at: Ottawa: 613-523-4004; Renfrew County: 613-732-1159; Eastern Counties: 613-932-4914

Education Day for Physicians and Clinicians!

2006 Dementia Symposium in Eastern Ontario

Thursday, March 30, 2006

8:30-4:00, Centurion Conference Centre,
170 Colonnade Rd., Ottawa; \$125

Keynote speakers include:

- Dr. Sandra Black: Assessment and Treatment of Dementia
- Dr. Inge Loy-English: Understanding Frontotemporal Dementia

Practical workshops will focus on clinical issues and case studies:

- Driving and dementia
- End-of-life decision making
- Pharmacological & non-pharmacological management of behaviours
- Assessing capacity

The Dementia Symposium is hosted by:

- Alzheimer Society
- Regional Geriatric Assessment Program of Ottawa
- Champlain Dementia Network

**CALL TODAY TO REGISTER:
613-513-4004**

Innovative Physician Education For You!

We will come to your office and do a one to one session with you or a 4-6 member breakfast or lunch and learn session (40-60 minutes). We will provide the food!



Physician educators will include:

Anna Byszewski, Bill Dalziel, Barbara Power, Inge Loy-English, and Louise Carrier.

**To find out more information, please call:
523-4004**

Workshop: Alzheimer Research Update

Dr. Inge Loy-English:
Advances in Biomedical Research

Dr. Claude Messier:
Social Psychological Factors in Alzheimer Disease

Dr. Steffany Bennett:
Stem Cell Research and Alzheimer Disease

Date: January 18th, 2006

Time: 1:00-3:00 p.m.

Location: Perley and Rideau Veteran's Health Centre, Lupton Hall

To Register: 523-4004 or
sheggart@alzheimeroth.org

THANK YOU

The Dementia Network of Ottawa would like to thank Janssen-Ortho, Pfizer and Lundbeck for sponsoring this edition of the Dementia Newsletter for Physicians.



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