

# Tools for Managing Challenging Behaviors in Persons with Dementia (Neurocognitive Disorders)

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# What is a Major Neurocognitive Disorder (NCD)?


- Significant cognitive decline in two or more neurocognitive domains





# Neurocognitive Domains

- Attention
- Language
- Executive function
- Learning and memory
- Social cognition
- Perceptual-motor



# 4 Tools for Management of Behavioral Issues in Persons with NCD

## Tool #1

What type of Neurocognitive Disorder/Dementia are you working with?

- Alzheimer's?
- Lewy Body?
- Vascular?
- Parkinson's?
- Korsakoff's (Alcohol induced)?
- Frontal Temporal Lobe?

# Why Does it Matter?

- Each responds to disease modifying agents differently
- Each responds to pharmacological interventions differently
- Each requires different behavioral approaches
- Each has different prognosis

# Types of Neurocognitive Disorders (NCD)

## ➤ Alzheimer's Type Dementia

- Busy
- Visually triggered,  
↓ concentration/attention
- Memory prompting NOT helpful
- Disease modifying drugs:  
Aricept/Razadyne/Exelon/Namenda
- Antipsychotics maybe?



# Non-pharmacological Approaches for Alzheimer's

- Engage & move to new space when distressed/upset
- Walk/explore
- Match emotional state and gently pull into safe space
- Baby dolls (?)
- Music (iPod)
- Exercise
- Work





# Types of Neurocognitive Disorders

- Vascular Dementia
  - Couch potato
  - Memory prompts ARE helpful
  - Behavioral Assistance
    - ✓ Drugs: Antidepressants/Ritalin (?)
  - Disease Modifying
    - ✓ Close management of vascular disease

# Non-pharmacological Approaches for Vascular Dementia

- Cheerleader
- Reminding
- Music (iPod)
- Create joy/fun
- Conversations



# Types of Neurocognitive Disorders

- Lewy Body Dementia
  - Gait problems first, then memory, REM disorder
  - Fluctuation in attention
  - Hallucinations/Delusions-scary
  - Mimics Parkinson's disease
  - Drugs: Cholinesterase inhibitors (Aricept, Ratadyne, Exelon)



# Non-pharmacological Approaches for Lewy Body Dementia

- Keep environment well lit to reduce illusions/hallucinations
- Try to keep in active environments except when sleeping
- Engage in “normal” conversation (do NOT talk down to)
- Exercise/Merry walkers
- Music (+/- iPod)

# Types of Neurocognitive Disorders

- Substance/Medication Induced Neurocognitive Disorder
  - Decline in neurocognitive domains exist beyond period of intoxication and withdrawal
  - Decline stabilizes or improves after abstinence



# Non-pharmacological Approaches to Substance/Medication Induced NCD

- Look for personal interests/hobbies
- Social engagement
- Exercise
- Music (iPod)
- Treat co-morbid mental health issues




# Types of Neurocognitive Disorders

## ➤ Fronto Temporal Lobe Dementia

- Disinhibition/compulsive/perseveration/loss of empathy
- Difficulty changing tracks
- Drugs: ????????





## Non-pharmacological Approaches for Fronto Temporal Lobe Dementia

- Follow their lead (Henry..., clapping...) – Need to feel in control of obsession
- Work with staff/families to not take statements personally
- Change caregivers, family members frequently




## Tool #2

# Know the Person

- Born in
- Siblings/rank in family
- Employment
- Hobbies/Recreation preferences  
(games/exercise/arts & crafts/housework/shop)
- Marital status
- Children
- Spiritual





Identify 3 things about the person with NCD that are meaningful to them

**Ginny**

- Loves her dog
- Family
- Likes game shows

**Tom**

- General surgeon
- Likes farming
- Likes to help

# Know their Music

- Preferences
- Playlist!!!
- Personal iPod



# Pets





Tool #3

Rule Out Delirium

# Confusion

- Constipation
- Oxygenation
- Nutrition
- Fluids
- Urinary Retention
- Sleep Deprivation
- Infections
- Opioidals/pain
- New Medication(s) & Old





Tool #4

Know Trigger(s)



# Triggers

- Territorial
- Noise level
- Boredom
- Being talked down to
- Hot/Cold
- Personal Care
- YOU



Any questions?

