

Delirium is a medical condition characterized by a disturbance in attention and awareness. It develops acutely and can fluctuate in severity.

HERE ARE SOME KEY FACTS ABOUT DELIRIUM:

1. Onset and Duration

- Delirium typically has a rapid onset, often within hours or days.
 - The duration can vary, with some cases resolving relatively quickly once the underlying cause is addressed, while other cases may persist for an extended period.
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2. Symptoms

- **Impaired cognition:** Delirium involves a decline in cognitive function, including difficulties with memory, orientation, and perception.
 - **Altered attention:** Patients may have difficulty maintaining focus.
 - **Altered arousal:** Patients may be somnolent or restless, or alternate between states.
 - **Fluctuating symptoms:** Delirium symptoms can vary in type and severity throughout the day, evening, and night.
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3. Causes

- Delirium is usually a result of an underlying medical condition or a combination of factors.
- Common causes include infections, medication side effects, metabolic imbalances, surgery, or underlying neurological disorders.





4. Risks and Factors

- People who are 65 years of age or older or under 5 years of age are at particularly elevated risk of delirium.
- Pre-existing cognitive impairment, such as dementia, increases the likelihood of developing delirium.

5. Diagnosis

- Diagnosis is typically based on clinical evaluation and the identification of potential underlying causes. (Physical and cognitive exam, bloodwork, imaging studies)
- Healthcare professionals may use validated tools to detect and diagnose delirium.

6. Treatment

- The primary approach to managing delirium is identifying and addressing the underlying cause(s).
- Supportive care, including measures to ensure patient safety and comfort, is essential.

7. Prevention

- In some cases, delirium may be prevented by addressing modifiable risk factors, avoiding certain medications, and implementing strategies to maintain overall health.

8. Prognosis

- The prognosis of delirium depends on its underlying cause(s) and how promptly these are addressed.
- Timely recognition and intervention can lead to a better outcome, while delayed diagnosis and treatment of underlying cause(s) may result in complications.

It is crucial for individuals experiencing symptoms of delirium or those caring for someone with delirium to seek medical attention promptly, as it often indicates an underlying health issue that requires evaluation and treatment.