

Cognitive Assessment Tools

Timely diagnosis of dementia enables people living with the disease and their caregivers to:

- Know and prepare for what to expect
- Plan for the future
- Engage in care planning based on their needs, values, and preferences
- Access supportive services in the community

When the diagnosis is identified, clinicians can act to prevent the health crises and caregiver exhaustion that result in ED visits and hospitalizations.

The Medicare Annual Wellness Visit (AWV) requires cognitive assessment. There are a number of simple, effective cognitive assessment tools to use during the AWV or whenever a concern arises about memory loss from either the patient or an informant.

Validated assessment tools for cognitive impairment are essential and listed below. Use in conjunction with patient history, clinical observation, and reports from the patient and their family or caregiver(s). All of the tools below are free for clinical use. **The Mini-Cog®, MIS, and AD8 are recommended for their brevity and validity in primary care or community settings.**

Cognitive Assessment Tools

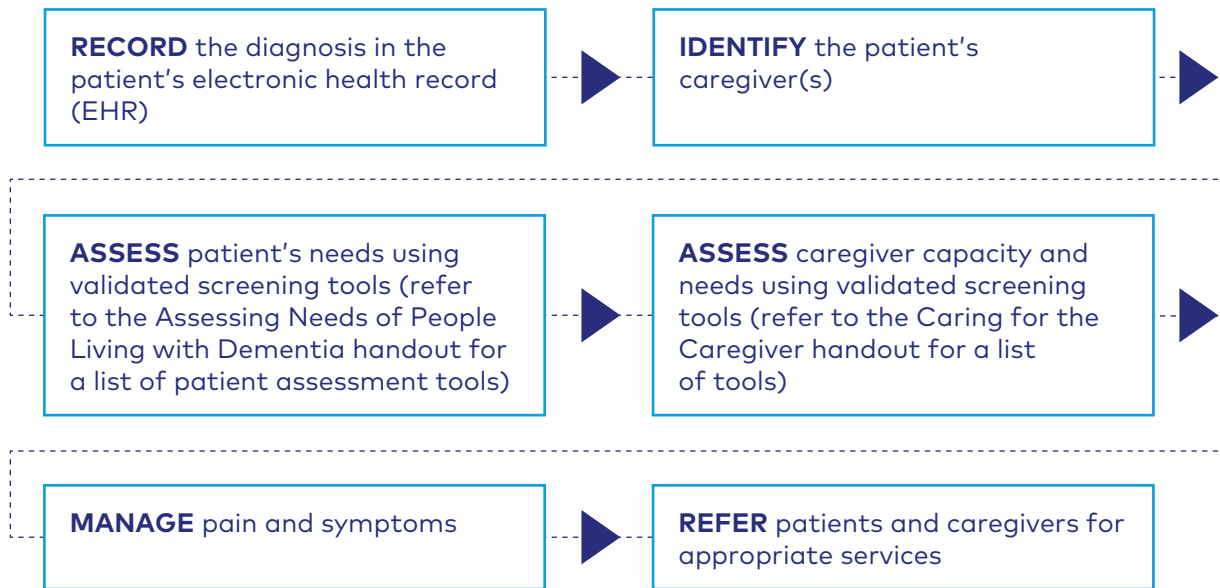
Tool	Components
For Patient	
Mini-Cog®	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> → Clock-drawing test, 3-word recall test → Requires the ability to write/draw → Can be administered in 5 minutes or less
Memory Impairment Screen (MIS)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> → Word recall and categorization exercises → Does not require ability to write/draw → May be administered by telephone using MIS-T version of tool → Can be administered in 5 minutes or less

Montreal Cognitive Assessment (MoCA)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> → 30-question test that covers 11 tasks, including drawing a cube and a clock face, word recall, naming animals shown in drawings, repeating sentences, and four attention tests → Test includes assessment of executive function → Available in many languages → Requires 10–15 minutes to complete
For Patient and/or Informant	
General Practitioner Assessment of Cognition (GPCOG)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> → 4-minute assessment of patient: remembering a name and address; stating today's date; drawing a clock face; stating something that has been in the news in the last week → 2-minute interview with caregiver: questions for the informant comparing the status of the patient now to their functional abilities 5 or 10 years ago → Requires the ability to write/draw
For Informant	
AD8 Dementia Screening Tool	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> → 8-question interview about cognitive changes detected in the patient in the last several years → May be administered by telephone → Informant is preferred, but can be administered to patient → Requires an average of 3 minutes to complete
Short Form of the Informant Questionnaire on Cognitive Decline in the Elderly (Short IQCODE)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> → 16 questions for the informant comparing the status of the patient now to their functional abilities 10 years ago → May be administered by telephone → Requires an average of 5-7 minutes to complete

Other Cognitive Assessment Resources

- **Alzheimer's Association's Cognitive Assessment Toolkit:** provides a comprehensive guide for detecting cognitive impairment during the Medicare Annual Wellness Visit, including screening tools (GPCOG, MIS, and Mini-Cog©) and a sample informant interview
- National Institute on Aging: **Memory Loss and Forgetfulness Resources**
- **Global Deterioration Scale and FAST Scale** for staging and prognosis after diagnosis

WHAT TO DO WHEN COGNITIVE IMPAIRMENT IS DIAGNOSED:



See CAPC's [Best Practices in Dementia Care and Caregiver Support](#) curriculum for more information about diagnosis, assessment, and support.