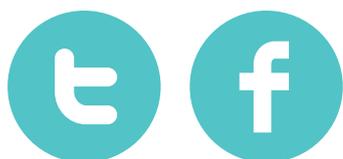


MILD COGNITIVE IMPAIRMENT

 nhft.nhs.uk/mas



MAKING A
DIFFERENCE
FOR YOU,
WITH YOU

WHAT IS MILD COGNITIVE IMPAIRMENT (MCI) ?

Having a diagnosis of MCI means you are experiencing a level of cognitive decline (memory or thinking) which is higher than average for your age. However, the symptoms are not severe enough to interfere significantly with your daily life.

SYMPTOMS

The cognitive assessment that you completed will have helped highlight the strengths and weaknesses in your ability. You may or may not have weaknesses in the following areas:

- Memory – for example, forgetting recent events or repeating the same question
- Reasoning, planning or problem-solving – for example, struggling with thinking things through
- Attention – for example, being very easily distracted
- Language – for example, taking much longer than usual to find the right word for something
- Visual depth perception – for example, struggling to interpret an object in three dimensions, judge distances or navigate stairs.

FEELINGS

Having symptoms of MCI may affect how you feel.

- Low mood or depressed – your GP or local Improving Access to Psychological Therapy service can provide assessment, advice or treatment. There are effective treatments for depression. Depression can affect your functioning, so it is important to get this addressed.
- Irritable or anxious – if you are experiencing this talk with people who you trust and consider speaking with your GP.
- You may also feel a loss of enthusiasm or enjoyment in the things that you do. You may feel anger, frustration or worry. It is usually good to talk to those you trust and with others in your situation. There are ways of getting in touch with others in your situation through local groups or the internet, go to www.nhft.nhs.uk/mas

WHAT CAUSES MCI?

There are many different reasons why people develop MCI. Often it can be difficult to identify an underlying cause. Your doctor may or may not be able to identify the underlying cause/s. If an underlying cause is identified then appropriate treatment will be prescribed.

WILL I GET BETTER?

It is important to note that 40% of people who receive a diagnosis of MCI will return to a level of functioning that is normal for their age. So there is hope for improvement in your functioning.

Having a diagnosis of MCI means that you have an increased risk of developing dementia in the future, but most people with MCI diagnosis will not develop dementia. Only around 1 in ten people per year with MCI will develop dementia. Most people with MCI will not progress to dementia in the 10 years following diagnosis; only around a third may do so.

Due to the increased risk of developing dementia it is important that you take actions described in this leaflet to reduce this risk.

HOW IS MCI TREATED?

There are currently no drugs that have been approved for treating MCI. Alzheimer's drugs have shown no clear benefit to MCI patients.

MCI is more likely to progress to dementia if the person has a poorly controlled heart condition or diabetes, or increased risk of strokes. Therefore, treatment for MCI may include medication for a heart condition, to reduce high blood pressure, prevent clots or lower cholesterol.

Exercise, a healthy diet, reduced alcohol intake and stopping smoking may be prescribed.

Social prescription of keeping physically, mentally and socially active may also be given. If depression is diagnosed this should be treated with medication, talking therapies or both.

WHAT ACTIONS CAN I TAKE TO POTENTIALLY IMPROVE FUNCTIONING AND REDUCE RISK OF DEMENTIA?

This is supported by a Mental Health Foundation report: 'How to look after your mental health in later life' - for more resources and useful information please visit our webpage:

www.nhft.nhs.uk/mas

Ten areas of your life that you can enact changes:

1. EXERCISE

Improving physical fitness contributes to cognitive ability, physical strength, balance, better mood and energy levels. If you already regularly exercise it is important to maintain this.

Some suggestions could be:

- Take up a physical activity: jogging, walking, swimming, martial art, dancing, or a competitive sport (bowling, football, badminton, etc.)
- Regularly go to the gym
- Find out information about local activities from the local paper, internet or free locally delivered papers/ magazines.

For links to useful websites visit: www.nhft.nhs.uk/mas

2. HEALTHY LIFESTYLE

Smoking, alcohol consumption and inactivity are linked to dementia.

For links to useful websites visit: www.nhft.nhs.uk/mas

3. COGNITIVE TRAINING

Cognitive training can improve cognitive functioning. This can be through crosswords, Sudoku, other puzzles or quizzes; or through online training.

For links to useful websites visit: www.nhft.nhs.uk/mas

4. OPTIMISM/ POSITIVE ATTITUDE

Adopting a positive or optimistic attitude can be a protective factor against depression and heart disease, and can have a positive effect on the immune system.

For links to useful websites visit: www.nhft.nhs.uk/mas

5. SOCIAL CAPITAL

Having an active social life can contribute to cognitive functioning, and help you feel less isolated and more engaged with the world around you.

Suggestions:

- Connect with friends and family
- Join a new social group

For links to useful websites visit: www.nhft.nhs.uk/mas

6. SENSE OF PURPOSE IN LIFE/ MEANINGFULNESS

Having a sense of purpose and meaning in life is a vital part of maintaining health and wellbeing.

Suggestions:

- Seek out opportunities to help others
- Maintain your existing interests
- Develop new interests
- Take a look at your local library notice board to see what is going on.

For links to useful websites visit: www.nhft.nhs.uk/mas

7. LEARN SOMETHING NEW

Learning is linked with recovery and some people find mindfulness or meditating to be beneficial.

For links to useful websites visit: www.nhft.nhs.uk/mas

8. EMPLOY STRATEGIES TO AID MEMORY AND LEARNING

It is much better to use the aids than struggle in coping – everyone uses aids of some sort!

Suggestions:

- Use calendars or a diary to record events and appointments
- Follow a set routine e.g. have night time medication next to your bedside lamp and take before switching off or put morning meds next to the breakfast cereal

- Use to-do lists and cross off a job when completed
- Put your wallet or purse, keys, phone and glasses in the same place each day
- Carry round a pocket sized notebook to record things that you want to remember
- Decide on a special place to keep important items such as keys, or glasses
- Make sure you put them back in the same place after using them, so you always know where to find them
- Use a pill box or weekly dispenser for tablets
- These can be requested free of charge via your GP
- Keep a diary
- Write down things you need as you think of them, i.e. shopping lists
- Use a white board to leave reminders to yourself or family members
- Keep a file of all the people you know, their addresses and phone numbers
- Use alarms (clocks, timers, mobile phone) as prompts, e.g. take food out of the oven, go to an appointment, take medications
- Use a digital recorder to record something as you remember it.

For links to useful websites visit: www.nhft.nhs.uk/mas

9. CHECK YOUR OWN MOOD LEVEL

Use assessments at www.nhft.nhs.uk/mas to see if you need to seek treatment for depression

10. HEALTHY DIET

A healthy diet can help reduce the risk of many chronic diseases, such as heart disease, diabetes and dementia.

In general, a healthy diet consists of 5 portions of fruits, leaves and vegetables per day, whole grains, berries/beans/pulses/nuts, unprocessed meat, fish (including oily fish), and poultry. You should cut out high sugar products and limit intake of products with added sugar and salt. Use coconut oil or olive oil for cooking.

For links to useful websites visit: www.nhft.nhs.uk/mas

WHAT SHOULD I DO IF MY FUNCTIONING IS GETTING WORSE?

You may feel that your memory, attention, concentration, problem solving abilities, language, or visual ability is getting worse. You may notice a change in your ability to do everyday tasks such as cooking, shopping, household chores, i.e. doing the things that you normally do. If this is the case it is helpful to check with family or friends to get their view.

If you feel that your functioning is getting worse then speak to your GP who may refer you back to the memory clinic for assessment.

MCI AND DRIVING

MCI will not normally prevent you from driving. If your driving is not affected then you do not have to inform the DVLA.

However, MCI symptoms may affect driving. The assessment that has been undertaken may identify issues related to driving ability. You will be advised if you should notify the DVLA. You will not automatically be prevented from driving and enquires will be made to judge driving ability; assessments may be carried out.

To notify the DVLA complete the form on the back of your driving licence or write a letter to the DVLA to explain, giving your driving licence number, name and address to Drivers Medical Group, DVLA, Swansea, SA99 1TU.

If you are advised to inform the DVLA and you do not do this then you can be fined up to £1000.

USEFUL RESOURCES

NHFT MEMORY ASSESSMENT SERVICE WEBSITE

www.nhft.nhs.uk/mas

NHS LIFESTYLE ADVICE

www.nhs.uk

AGE UK

www.ageuk.org.uk 0800 055 6112

SILVER LINE

0800 470 8090

VOLUNTARY IMPACT NORTHAMPTONSHIRE

www.voluntaryimpact.org.uk 01604 637522



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www.nhft.nhs.uk



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www.nhft.nhs.uk/mas**

Inspected and rated

Good



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If you require this leaflet in other formats or languages please contact PALS: 0800 917 8504

এই লফিলটেট যদ আপনার অন্য কোনো ফরম্যাটে বা ভাষায় প্রয়োজন হয়, তবে অনুগ্রহ করে

0800 917 8504 নম্বরে পালস এর সাথে যোগাযোগ করুন

Jeżeli się skrajutę norite gauti kitu formatu ar kalba, kreipkitės į PALS: 0800 917 8504

Jeżeli są Państwo zainteresowani otrzymaniem tych informacji w innym formacie lub języku,

prosimy o kontakt z PALS pod numerem telefonu 0800 917 8504.

Dacă aveți nevoie de acest prospect în alte formate sau limbi, vă rugăm să contactați PALS: 0800 917 8504

Если Вы хотели бы получить данную брошюру на другом языке или в другом формате, просим обращаться в PALS (Информационная служба для пациентов) по 0800 917 8504.