

## Referral To The Memory Clinic

If patient has a deteriorating memory problem, and worry that it may be a sign of early dementia, he or she may benefit from an assessment by our team. To derive maximum benefit from the consultation, the patient should be:

- Ambulant (be able to get out of bed/chair and walk with or without assistance)
- Accompanied by a close relative or caregiver, who is familiar with the patient's daily activities

A complete evaluation may require two or three visits to the clinic.

For patients who are already diagnosed to have dementia, but whose caregivers need counselling and information, appointments can be made directly with the Nurse Clinician (Dementia Care).

Note: The Memory Clinic is a sub-specialty clinic. The healthcare team will not be able to manage other medical problems patients might have. Patients will still need to see other doctors for other medical problems.



### BUS & MRT SERVICES

B1 (ALONG THOMSON ROAD)  
SBS : 21, 56, 57, 131, 131A, 166  
SMRT : 980

B3 (ALONG MOULMEIN ROAD)  
SBS : 21, 124, 124A, 518, 518A

NS 20 (NORTH-SOUTH LINE / NOVENA MRT)

### LEGEND

-  BUS STOP
-  TAXI STAND
-  CAR PARK
-  MRT



Centre for Geriatric Medicine enquiries and appointment line: Tel: 6359 6100 Fax: 6359 6101

### Centre for Geriatric Medicine

A Partner of The Institute of Geriatrics & Active Ageing  
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# Centre for Geriatric Medicine

## Cognition and Memory Disorders Service – Memory Clinic



Tan Tock Seng  
HOSPITAL



## Worried About Memory Problems?

Forgetfulness is common in otherwise normal older people and is usually stable (does not get worse with time) and benign (does not affect the ability to care for themselves). This is not necessarily a cause for concern.

However, more serious and progressive forgetfulness may be caused by a disease of the brain, such as dementia. If potentially reversible causes of dementia are detected and appropriate treatment is started early, the disease may be controlled and its progress retarded. The more common causes of dementia are Alzheimer's Disease and Vascular Dementia. Although these are not reversible, early detection will enable treatment to be started, which can help improve the patient's symptoms, quality of life as well as reduce the stress of the caregiver.

## How We Can Help You ?

### Diagnosis

The early stage of dementia can be difficult to distinguish from age-related memory loss

or even depression. A systematic approach is adopted and it involves the following steps:

- Comprehensive clinical assessment of the patient by the geriatrician, with detailed background history obtained from the family or caregivers.
- Assessment of the behavioural, functional and social impact of the illness, including caregiver stress, by the nurse clinician.
- When necessary, standard psychometric tests will be conducted by the psychologist to assess the patient's mental functions.
- Neuroimaging of the brain, and blood tests may be ordered when necessary.

### Treatment

Upon diagnosis, a team of healthcare professionals will discuss and propose a treatment plan for the patient and family members.

- Medication(s) may be prescribed to slow down the decline in mental functions and reduce the severity and frequency of the behaviour problems.

- The nurse clinician will explain what is dementia and teach caregivers the necessary coping skills and practical tips for frequently encountered problems, including home safety. Information on suitable community services will be provided and, if needed, referrals to these services will be made.
- Referral may be made to the Occupational Therapist to assess home safety (for those patients living at home alone) and driving safety (patients who are still driving).
- Patients may also be referred to Cognitive Retraining Programmes such as MINDFit, MINDVital and MINDActive if assessed to be suitable.

### Social Support

Our medical social workers can assist with application for financial aid, provide emotional support for caregivers who are experiencing significant stress from the caregiving role, as well as application for admission to long-term care institutions for patients who are no longer capable of living at home alone and do not have a caregiver.

# Memory Problems?

When an older person complains of forgetfulness, three useful and important questions to ask are:

- 1) Is the forgetfulness part of normal ageing, or is it due to a disease?
- 2) If it is due to a disease, is it dementia?
- 3) If it is dementia, what is the treatment?

