

# OVERVIEW OF MILD COGNITIVE IMPAIRMENT (MCI)

## FACTS

- There is a noticeable but mild decline in memory or thinking skills.
- The changes are noticeable to the person or the family but do not affect day-to-day living.
- MCI increases the risk for developing Alzheimer's or another dementia.
- 15-20% of people over the age of 65 have MCI.
- People with MCI may improve, stay the same, or have progression of symptoms over time.
- MCI affects men more often than women.

## SYMPTOMS

- Increased forgetfulness
- Difficulty remembering things that were previously easily recalled
- Forgetting appointments or scheduled events
- Frequently losing train of thought during conversations, while reading, or when watching TV
- Feeling overwhelmed when attempting to make plans or decisions
- Having trouble navigating familiar locations
- Being impulsive or showing poor judgement
- Trouble planning steps to accomplish a task
- Difficulty understanding instructions

## RISK FACTORS

- Advanced age
- Family history of MCI or dementia
- History of high blood pressure, diabetes, stroke, high cholesterol, or heart disease
- Lack of exercise

- Lack of participation in mentally or socially stimulating activities

## REVERSIBLE CAUSES

- Medication
- Infections
- Vitamin deficiencies and malnutrition
- Thyroid disease
- Anxiety and depression
- Substance and/or alcohol abuse
- Hearing loss

## DIAGNOSIS

- Thorough review and assessment of medical history and medications, observations during the appointment, and interviews with family or close friends
- Physical and neurological exam, including memory test and depression screen
- Lab studies, including blood count and glucose, thyroid, Vitamin B12, and Vitamin D levels

## TREATMENT

- Medications may be used to treat mild memory loss.
- Mental stimulation is recommended through new socializations, starting or expanding hobbies, doing puzzles, and reading fiction.
- Adopting a healthy lifestyle with exercise, the Mediterranean diet, and adequate hydration is important.
- Vitamin replacement may be recommended.
- Limit alcohol intake and stop smoking.
- Correct hearing if there is a deficit.
- The treatment of underlying anxiety or depression may help improve symptoms of MCI.