



Neuropsychological Assessment

A neuropsychological assessment provides information about the way in which a brain injury affects the way a person thinks and acts.

In this article

- What does a neuropsychological assessment evaluate?
- Benefits of a neuropsychological assessment
- Obtaining a neuropsychological assessment

What does a neuropsychological assessment evaluate?

A neuropsychological assessment will usually be provided in the early stages of recovery. The main aim of the assessment is to maximise the survivor's rehabilitation and participation in family, work and the community.

The assessment can also be used to guide rehabilitation, and evaluates the following areas of functioning:

- perceptual, sensory and motor functions
- concentration, attention and memory
- emotions, personality and behaviour
- language
- problem-solving
- planning and organisation
- intelligence
- study skills

The neuropsychologist will usually look at a person's case history and hospital records. They will also talk to family members to learn about the person's functioning before the brain injury.

Benefits of a neuropsychological assessment

As well as guiding the rehabilitation process, a neurological assessment will help the person and their family understand the impact of the brain injury. The neuropsychologist will usually meet with family to discuss the findings. It can be helpful to record the meeting or take notes for future reference. Family members can ask for a written report that covers the case history, current issues, tests conducted, observations, assessment results and recommendations.

The neuropsychologist should explain any expected problem area and the impact these will have on daily life. For example, if a person has damage to the frontal lobes of their brain, they will have difficulty planning and organising. The family can then help by providing structure, prompts and reminders. Similarly, a neuropsychologist can explain where it is unlikely that the brain injury will have an effect on ability.

Obtaining a neuropsychological assessment

These tests can be quite expensive and are usually done during rehabilitation. If this isn't the case, then often universities with programs in neuropsychology provide evaluations at low cost or sliding scale as part of their student training.