

Review on Delirium Disorder

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Abstract: *Delirium, a condition characterized by an acute change in attention, awareness and cognition, is caused by a medical condition that cannot be better explained by a pre-existing neurocognitive disorder. Multiple predisposing factors (for example, pre-existing cognitive impairment) and precipitating factors (for example, urinary tract infection) for delirium have been described, with most patients having both types. Because multiple factors are implicated in the aetiology of delirium, there are likely several neurobiological processes contributing to delirium pathogenesis, including neuroinflammation, brain vascular dysfunction, altered brain metabolism, neurotransmitter imbalance and impaired neuronal network connectivity. The Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders, 5th edition (DSM-5) is the most commonly used diagnostic system upon which a reference standard diagnosis is made, although many other delirium screening tools have been developed owing to the impracticality of using DSM-5 in many settings. Pharmacological treatments for delirium (such as antipsychotic drugs) are not effective, reflecting substantial gaps in our understanding of pathophysiology. Currently, the best management strategies are multidomain interventions that focus on treating precipitating conditions, medication review, managing distress, mitigating complications, and maintaining engagement to environmental issues. Effective implementation of delirium detection, treatment and prevention strategies remains a major challenge for healthcare organizations.*

Keywords: acute confusion, disorientation, altered mental status, hallucination, agitation, inattention, disorganized thinking, memory problems and sleep-wake cycle disruption

