



# The END DSD Monthly News

## The Mini Mental Status Exam

The Mini Mental Status Exam, otherwise known as the MMSE is a validated, effective tool for identifying cognitive impairment in the elderly population. It is easy to use and is comprised of 11 questions that takes 5-10 minutes to administer. The maximum score one can achieve is 30; anything below 23 is cause for concern and should be further evaluated.



### Administering the MMSE

**Orientation:** Ask the year, season, date, day of the week and month. Then ask the state, county, town, hospital, and floor (they get one point for each correct answer. Prompt them if they leave something out by asking specific questions such as "Can you tell me the day of the week?" Also if it is near a transition time between two seasons then accept either season as correct.)

**Registration:** Name three objects, such as apple, penny, ball. Have them repeat the objects back to you and ask them to remember them for later. (Again, they get one point for each correct answer)

**Attention:** Ask them to spell WORLD backwards. (They get one point for each correct letter in the **correct spot**; i.e. dlrow=5, dlrow=3)

**Recall:** Ask them to repeat the three objects you named before. (They get one point for each correct object they rename. The order of the answers does not matter.)

**Language:** **Show them a pencil and a watch and ask them to name them.** (One point is awarded for each correct answer)

**Ask them to repeat, "No ifs ands or buts."** Make sure "s" endings are audible. (One point is awarded if the whole phrase is repeated correctly. For example, no points would be given if the patient said "No if ands or but.")

**Test their ability to follow a 3-stage command:** Ask them to take a piece of paper in their right hand, fold it in half, and place it on the bed. (A total of up to three points can be awarded for completion of each command. Points are only awarded if they take the paper in their RIGHT hand.)

**Show them a piece of paper that says "CLOSE YOUR EYES" and ask them to read and do what it says.** (They get one point for closing their eyes)

**Ask them to write a sentence.** (One point is awarded for the completion of a whole sentence complete with noun and verb)

**As a last test ask them to copy a picture of two intersecting pentagons.** The pentagons must both have 5 sides and at the point of intersection must be a shape with 4 sides. (One point is awarded for successful completion)

**Level of consciousness:** There are 5 possible choices for rating LOC. One of the five is Normal (Alert). The other four are abnormal: Vigilant (Hyperalert), Lethargic, Stupor, and Coma.

**If patient is alert (normal), check "Yes" to this item on the computer screen and do not check any of the other four (abnormal) categories.**

*The biggest challenge of delirium superimposed on dementia lies in recognizing the condition, the symptoms of which are often attributed to the dementia process itself or to normal aging*

## Questions or concerns?

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## Tips for administering the MMSE:

- Make sure your patient is wearing their eyeglasses or hearing aids if necessary.
- Speak loud, clear, and use simple vocabulary.
- Do not correct the patient if they are wrong. Be encouraging.
- Do not provide clues or hints.
- If the individual refuses to answer, then score the item(s) as zero and **make a note** as to why the patient refused or if they were physically unable (i.e. hand in a cast and unable to do drawing)
- You can use the MMSE to assess your patient's strengths, not just weaknesses!
- It gives you an objective score that you can use to establish a baseline
- You should look at the score for a change greater than 2 points...this may indicate delirium.

**\*\*Keep a look out for laminated copies of the MMSE that will be placed around the unit for use\*\***



## END DSD Staff Spotlight!

For this month we had a chat with Unit Champion, Marjory Price.

### **What made you choose nursing?**

Marjory: I chose nursing because I've always wanted to help people. I knew since the 6th grade that I wanted to be a nurse.

### **What interests you most about geriatrics?**

Marjory: I enjoy geriatrics because I feel they have wisdom that benefits each and every one of us. I totally enjoy interacting with them and learning from them.

### **What is something that not many people know about you?**

Marjory: Most people do not know that I speak 2 distinct languages in addition to English (French and Creole) and want to learn Spanish, Italian, and Mandarin. I also want to take up photography and travel in the near future.

### **What is your favorite leisure time activity?**

Marjory: My favorite leisure time activity is to curl up with a good book. Last year I experimented with landscaping and enjoyed it thoroughly. This year I'm taking up gardening.

### **What do you think is something you excel at?**

Marjory: I believe I excel at relationships. I love people and enjoy interacting with many different people.

### **What is something that you don't do so well but wish you could?**

Marjory: I don't pronounce generic drug names very well or remember too many generic name and side effects of drugs, but I am practicing daily to get better.

### **Anything else you'd like people to know?**

Marjory: I want to someday teach Nursing or become a Nurse Recruiter. I enjoy cooking, baking and trying new recipes. I especially love to find old homemade recipes. I make a mean banana bread and one of the best homemade rolls ever made (per family report of course!)

