

Guide to Determine Alzheimer Disease or Dementia Stages for CBAS Screening

COGNITIVE IMPAIRMENTS (*Welfare and Institutions Code section 14522.4*)

“Cognitive impairment” is “the loss or deterioration of intellectual capacity characterized by impairments in short- or long-term memory, language, concentration and attention, orientation to people, place, or time, visual-spatial abilities or executive functions, or both, including, but not limited to, judgment, reasoning, or the ability to inhibit behaviors that interfere with social, occupational, or everyday functioning due to conditions, including, but not limited to, mild cognitive impairment, Alzheimer's Disease or other form of dementia, or brain injury.”

Stage 1: No cognitive impairment

Unimpaired individuals experience no memory problems and none are evident to a health care professional during a medical interview.

Stage 2: Very mild decline

Individuals at this stage feel as if they have memory lapses, forgetting familiar words or names or the location of keys, eyeglasses or other everyday objects. But these problems are not evident during a medical examination or apparent to friends, family or co-workers.

Stage 3: Mild cognitive decline

Early-stage Alzheimer's can be diagnosed in some, but not all, individuals with these symptoms. Friends, family or co-workers begin to notice deficiencies. Problems with memory or concentration may be measurable in clinical testing or discernible during a detailed medical interview. Common difficulties include:

- Word- or name-finding problems noticeable to family or close associate
- Decreased ability to remember names when introduced to new people
- Performance issues in social and work settings noticeable to others
- Reading a passage and retaining little material
- Losing or misplacing a valuable object
- Decline in ability to plan or organize

For purposes of CBAS eligibility, participants classified as having mild to moderate Alzheimer's disease or other dementia must have the symptoms seen below or be characterized by the descriptors of, or equivalent to Stage 4 as seen below:

Stage 4: Moderate cognitive decline

(Mild or early-stage Alzheimer's disease). At this stage, a careful medical interview detects clear-cut deficiencies in the following areas:

- Decreased knowledge of recent events
- Impaired ability to perform challenging mental arithmetic. For example, to count backward from 100 by 7s
- Decreased capacity to perform complex tasks, such as marketing, planning dinner for guests, or paying bills and managing finances
- Reduced memory of personal history
- The affected individual may seem subdued and withdrawn, especially in socially or mentally challenging situations

For purposes of CBAS eligibility, participants classified as having moderate to severe Alzheimer's disease or other dementia must have the symptoms seen below or be characterized by the descriptors of, or equivalent to Stages 5, 6, and or 7 as seen below:

Stage 5: Moderately severe cognitive decline

(Moderate or mid-stage Alzheimer's disease). Major gaps in memory and deficits in cognitive function emerge. Some assistance with day-to-day activities becomes essential. At this stage, individuals may:

- Be unable during a medical interview to recall such important details as their current address, their telephone number, or the name of the college or high school from which they graduated
- Become confused about where they are or about the date, day of the week or season
- Have trouble with less challenging mental arithmetic; for example, counting backward from 40 by 4s or from 20 by 2s
- Need help choosing proper clothing for the season or the occasion
- Usually retain substantial knowledge about themselves and know their own name and the names of their spouse or children
- Usually require no assistance with eating or using the toilet

Stage 6: Severe cognitive decline

(Moderately severe or mid-stage Alzheimer's disease). Memory difficulties continue to worsen, significant personality changes may emerge, and affected individuals need extensive help with daily activities. At this stage, individuals may:

- Lose most awareness of recent experiences and events as well as of their surroundings
- Recollect their personal history imperfectly, although they generally recall their own name
- Occasionally forget the name of their spouse or primary caregiver but generally can distinguish familiar from unfamiliar faces
- Need help getting dressed properly; without supervision, may make such errors as putting pajamas over daytime clothes or shoes on wrong feet
- Experience disruption of their normal sleep/waking cycle
- Need help with handling details of toileting (flushing toilet, wiping and disposing of tissue properly)
- Have increasing episodes of urinary or fecal incontinence
- Experience significant personality changes and behavioral symptoms, including suspiciousness and delusions (for example, believing that their caregiver is an impostor); hallucinations (seeing or hearing things that are not really there); or compulsive, repetitive behaviors such as hand-wringing or tissue shredding
- Tend to wander and become lost

Stage 7: Very severe cognitive decline

(Severe or late-stage Alzheimer's disease). This is the final stage of the disease when individuals lose the ability to respond to their environment, the ability to speak, and, ultimately, the ability to control movement.

- Frequently individuals lose their capacity for recognizable speech, although words or phrases may occasionally be uttered. Individuals need help with eating and toileting and there is general incontinence
- Individuals lose the ability to walk without assistance, then the ability to sit without support, the ability to smile, and the ability to hold their head up. Reflexes become abnormal and muscles grow rigid. Swallowing is impaired.