

Delirium vs. Dementia

Both Delirium and Dementia feature cognitive impairments and various psychiatric symptoms but here are some things to look for:

Delirium

- Reversible
- Usually develops over hours or days
- Symptoms of wax and wane
- Multiple medical causes
- Previously damaged brains are more vulnerable and slower to recover

Dementia

- Irreversible damage/loss
- Sometimes slow/insidious (degenerative illnesses such as: Alzheimer's, Parkinson's, Frontotemporal, Lewy Body)
- Vascular (strokes or bleeds)
- TBI
- Substance abuse (Alcohol)
- Episodes of low oxygen

The simplest screening tests for cognitive impairments:

- MMSE (Mini-Mental State Examination)
- SLUMS (Saint Louis University Mental Status Examination)
- MOCA (Montreal Cognitive Assessment)