

VCU Parkinson's Disease Center

Neuropsychological Assessment

A guide for patients and their families





What is a neuropsychologist?

Neuropsychologists are psychologists with specialized training in understanding brain functions, including changes in thinking, mood and behavior that can occur in neurological conditions or medical illness. Neuropsychologists work with other medical professionals and treatment teams to maximize medical outcomes and promote positive health and well-being for individuals.

Why do I need an evaluation?

You have been referred for a neuropsychological evaluation to assess whether you have experienced changes in your thinking, mood and behavior due to a neurological condition or medical illness. Your evaluation is only one piece of information used by your treating physicians to determine how to best care for you. It will be combined with a variety of other medical information to make decisions about your care. If your evaluation reveals

difficulties in any areas, recommendations will be provided to help you, your family and treating physicians improve your overall health.

What should I expect?

Your neuropsychological evaluation will involve an assessment appointment — generally lasting between one and four hours depending on your medical history and referral questions. During the assessment, you will be asked to answer questions about yourself and your background. You also will be asked to complete a variety of paper-and-pencil tasks that are used to evaluate different thinking skills. You may take breaks during your evaluation as needed.

Meet the specialist

Dr. Sarah K. Lageman, Ph.D., ABPP-CN, is board certified in clinical neuropsychology and specializes in neuropsychological assessment and neurorehabilitation for individuals with neurological disorders.





What is a neuropsychological assessment?

A neuropsychological assessment examines attention, speed of thinking, visual and language skills, learning and memory, problem-solving, reasoning, and other brain functions. Important aspects include:

- Determination of current cognitive strengths and weaknesses
- Information regarding possible causes of thinking, mood or behavioral changes
- Recommendations for optimizing overall health, independence and quality of life

What happens after the assessment?

Following your appointment, the results and recommendations of your evaluation will be provided to you and anyone you would like to have included in your care.

How should I prepare?

To prepare for your evaluation, we recommend you:

- Get a good night's rest.
- Eat meals as you typically would (i.e., breakfast, lunch).
- Take all of your prescription medications as prescribed.
- Bring a list of all of your medications and dosages.
- Bring glasses, hearing aids, any medications you may need and snacks if you wish.



For more information or to
schedule an appointment

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