

Learning Objectives

MedBridge

Foundations of Cognitive Impairments: Understanding Attention

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Course Objectives:

Upon completion of this course, learners will be able to:

- Describe the concept of attention and the importance of alertness as a requirement to attend
- Identify key neuroanatomical structures that serve important roles in the attentional network, emphasizing the distributed nature of the system
- Contrast attentional problems seen in neurologic populations based on typical areas of neuroanatomical damage
- Provide examples of different types of attention, illustrating how these types of attention could be observed in typical examination or treatment sessions
- Describe principles of dual-task assessment related to performing a motor task (e.g. walking) and a secondary cognitive or motor task

Chapter 1: Attention Definition

This chapter answers the question, “what is attention?” The prerequisites of attention are covered, including: alert, orient, and select. Components of the brain involved in attention will also be discussed.

Chapter 2: Types of Attention

In this chapter, the types of attention will be covered: sustained, focused, alternating, and divided. A case example will be discussed to show how modifications to an environment can reduce distractions and improve motor skills.

Chapter 3: Dual-task Performance: A Window on Attention

The link between dual-task performance impairments and fall risk/safety concerns will be covered in this chapter. Foundational literature in older adults will be discussed, as well as additional literature in patients with stroke, PD, and TBI.