

PRACTICAL USE OF GERIATRIC ASSESSMENT TOOLS
Geriatric Medicine Division – The University of Texas Medical School at Houston

To our residents:

Attached are geriatric assessment instruments to help you take better care of your patients. We have included some of the more commonly used tools and selected those that have the best sensitivity and specificity while at the same time do not take an inordinate amount of time. For each test we have listed the prevalence of disorder screened, the time it takes to administer, the sensitivity and specificity, and the steps you should take if there is a positive score. If you have any questions please contact any of our faculty – Geriatric Division main number is 713-500-6282.

Included in the packet are:

- 1.) The Confusion Assessment Method for delirium.
 - a. Prevalence of delirium – 25-68% - higher if demented or older
 - b. Time administer the test – 2 minutes
 - c. Sensitivity and specificity – 97%, 92%
 - d. Next steps if positive – standard delirium work-up- this is a medical emergency

- 2.) The Mini-cog for dementia
 - a. Prevalence of dementia – 15-45% - higher if older
 - b. Time administer the test – 3 minutes
 - c. Sensitivity and specificity – 7-99%, 86-96%
 - d. Next steps if positive – use the Mini-mental State Examination to determine severity; dementia work-up

- 3.) The Geriatric Depression Scale – 5 question version
 - a. Prevalence of delirium – 12-25% - higher if from a nursing home
 - b. Time administer the test – < 5 minutes
 - c. Sensitivity and specificity – 97%, 90%
 - d. Next steps if positive – depression work-up, treatment

- 4.) The Get Up and Go test for functional status
 - a. Prevalence of disability – 20% - higher if demented or with multiple co-morbidities
 - b. Time administer the test – < 45 seconds on average
 - c. Sensitivity and specificity – 97%, 92%
 - d. Next steps if positive – consider Tinetti Gait and Balance, PT evaluation

- 5.) The IADLs for functional status
 - a. Prevalence of delirium – 25-68% - higher if demented or older
 - b. Time administer the test – < 3 minutes
 - c. Sensitivity and specificity – 90%, 90% - using a cut-off of 5
 - d. Next steps if positive – use the Mini-mental State Examination ; dementia work-up