

## **The Mini-Cog test is a 3-minute instrument to screen for cognitive impairment in older adults in the primary care setting**

- the Mini-Cog, a composite of three-item recall and clock drawing, was developed as a brief test for discriminating demented from non-demented persons in a community sample of culturally, linguistically, and educationally heterogeneous older adults
- the Mini-Cog uses a three-item recall test for memory and a simply scored clock-drawing test (CDT). The latter serves as an "informative distractor", helping to clarify scores when the memory recall score is intermediate
- the Mini-Cog was as effective as or better than established screening tests in both an epidemiologic survey in a mainstream sample and a multi-ethnic, multilingual population comprising many individuals of low socioeconomic status and education level
- in comparative tests, the Mini-Cog was at least twice as fast as the Mini-Mental State Examination. The Mini-Cog is less affected by subject ethnicity, language, and education, and can detect a variety of different dementias. Moreover, the Mini-Cog detects many people with mild cognitive impairment (cognitive impairment too mild to meet diagnostic criteria for dementia)

### **INSTRUCTIONS FOR ADMINISTRATION SCORING/SPECIAL INSTRUCTIONS**

**1. Get patient's attention and ask him or her to remember three unrelated words. Ask patient to repeat the words to ensure the learning was correct.**

- allow patient three tries, then go to next item

**2. Draw a circle and ask patient to write the numbers on the face of a clock.**

This step is mostly a distraction. If the patient is unable to write, then distract them by asking them to spell WORLD backwards.

**3. Ask the patient to recall the three words from Step 1.**

#### **Scoring:**

**Score 1 point for each recalled word**

Score clock drawing as Normal (the patient places the correct time and the clock appears grossly normal) or Abnormal

- 0 - Positive for cognitive impairment
- 1-2 - Abnormal clock drawing test (CDT) then positive for cognitive impairment
- 1-2 - Normal CDT then negative for cognitive impairment
- 3 - Negative screen for dementia (no need to score CDT)

#### **Reference:**

- Borson S, Scanlan J, Brush M, Vitaliano P, Dokmak A. The mini-cog: a cognitive "vital signs" measure for dementia screening in multi-lingual elderly. *Int J Geriatr Psychiatry*. 2000;15(11):1021-1027.

- Borson S, Scanlan JM, Chen P, Ganguli M. The Mini-Cog as a screen for dementia: validation in a population-based sample. *J Am Geriatr Soc.* 2003;51(10):1451-1454.