

Three Item Recall Test

Purpose : Quick screening test for short term memory

Admin time : 10 min.

User Friendly : High

Administered by: GP or nurse

Content : 3 items for recall, with instructions for administration and interpretation

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<https://www.cgakit.com/p-1-three-objects-recall>

Three Item Recall Test

Name

Date

Assessed by

1. The questions

Give the patient three words to remember (usually, the names of two concrete objects and one abstract idea).

Please remember and repeat the following: ball, telephone, and charity.

Ask the patient to repeat the three words immediately, which tests immediate recall and also shows whether the patient can attend, concentrate, and understand instructions.

Go on to other interview questions.

After 5 minutes, ask the patient to repeat the three words again.

2. The answers : 2 recalled

If the patient can only remember two of the three (2/3) items, repeat the test. If the patient has a primary psychiatric disorder, the memory should improve. If the patient has a neurological deficit, the memory will remain impaired.

The patient can be given a categorical hint (i.e., a round object) or a list of multiple-choice answers, which provides additional cues and uses recognition memory (which is less readily impaired than short-term recall).

3. The answers : 0 or 1 recalled

If the patient can only recall 0/1 or 1/3 items after 5 minutes, provide three evocative or colourful things to remember.

Please remember these things that I love: The Beatles, fast red cars, and chocolate ice cream.

If the patient can recall these after 5 minutes, it means that the poor score on Test One was probably due to anxiety, inability to attend (secondary to delirium), poor concentration, or lack of effort.

Notes :