

# Automated tests for diagnosing and monitoring cognitive impairment: a diagnostic accuracy review

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## Plain English summary

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## Plain English summary

The number of people who have problems with their memory and thinking is rising. The testing of memory and thinking is difficult and, in the early stages, the person with problems may show only small changes.

Pen-and-paper tests are often used to test memory loss and thinking problems, alongside discussions with health-care specialists and the individual, often in the company of their families or caregivers. Depending on the level of memory loss and thinking problems, some people are offered treatment, whereas others are followed up to see if their symptoms become worse. New tests to assess these problems have been developed that are computer based and sometimes do not need a specialist to be involved.

We carried out a systematic review (a review of studies conducted by others) to look at how well these computer-based tests diagnosed people with memory loss and thinking problems. We found limited evidence to support the use of these computer-based tests in clinical practice without the involvement of a health-care specialist. For this reason, at this time, we would recommend against approaches that use computerised tests by themselves.

We also asked a person living with memory problems for their views on the results of this research.

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