

Oral presentation

Mild cognitive impairment: why bother?

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The existence of an intermediate zone between dementia and normal cognitive function has long been recognized. This terminology has evolved from that of “benign senescent forgetfulness” proposed by Kral in 1962 to the more modern concept of mild cognitive impairment (MCI) defined by Petersen in 1999. In many cases, MCI will eventually lead to a more severe condition consistent with a diagnosis of dementia. However, some cases may remain stable or even improve. Efforts towards a better prediction of conversion to dementia have led to modified criteria for MCI and the creation of clinical subgroups within this entity. Although pharmacological trials in MCI have generally been disappointing, recognition of this condition may be crucial for the early detection of dementing processes and rapid initiation of therapeutic interventions to slow down or arrest the progression of dementia.