



The
**Dementia
Society**
Ottawa and Renfrew County

MILD COGNITIVE IMPAIRMENT



After receiving a diagnosis of Mild Cognitive Impairment, you may be wondering:

WHAT IS MILD COGNITIVE IMPAIRMENT?

Mild Cognitive Impairment (MCI) is a slight but noticeable decline in mental abilities. MCI can affect memory, judgement, thinking, or language. These symptoms are less severe than dementia but more severe than in normal aging.

Sometimes people have other health problems that cause MCI. After treating these problems, their abilities improve. Yet some people with MCI have symptoms that get worse. In these cases, they might later be diagnosed with dementia. Others live with MCI without ever developing dementia.

WHAT CAUSES MCI?

There is no single cause. Often, but not always, the risks for developing MCI are the same as dementia.

- To learn more about the science of dementia: [Click Here](#)

Risk factors include old age, family history of dementia, and lifestyle. Medical conditions can also increase the risk. Some conditions include depression, heart disease, diabetes, and high blood pressure.

At present, there is no cure for MCI. Instead, treatment focusses on lifestyle changes and risk reduction. Symptoms sometimes improve by:

- Maintaining a healthy diet
- Quitting smoking
- Exercising on a regular basis
- Protecting your head from injuries
- Maintaining an active social life

To learn more about reducing the risk of developing MCI: [Click Here](#)

To read more about prevention, check-out this fact sheet on *Living Well for Brain Health*: [Click Here](#)

WHAT ARE THE SYMPTOMS?

Symptoms differ from person to person. Some forms of MCI affect memory the most. Other forms do not impact memory at all. Other common symptoms include:

- Difficulty following along in conversations, books, or movies
- Feeling overwhelmed by decisions or planning
- Becoming more impulsive or showing poor judgment
- Feeling depressed, irritable, or anxious

A person with MCI may be aware that their mental abilities have become worse. Generally, the changes are not bad enough to interfere with day-to-day life.

HOW IS MCI DIAGNOSED?

There is no single test to diagnose MCI. Instead, the doctor will ask questions about:

- Personal and family medical history
- Ease of doing daily activities
- Concerns of family members or friends

The doctor might also:

- Test the person's mental abilities
- Do blood tests and brain scans

Experts recommend that a person diagnosed with MCI be re-evaluated every six months. It is important to determine if symptoms are staying the same, improving, or getting worse.

MORE INFORMATION AND RESOURCES

- Watch this webinar on Mild Cognitive Impairment: <https://fb.watch/1z33J3LiGW/>
- Watch this presentation by two Clinical Neuropsychologists: <https://vimeo.com/75826507>
 - Sign up for the Dementia Basics workshop: <https://dementiahelp.ca/programs-services/ottawa-programs/>
 - Read more about Dementia and caregiving: <https://dementiahelp.ca/understanding-dementia/resources-factsheets/>
 - Reach out to the Dementia Society. You do not need a diagnosis of MCI or dementia to get support and answers to your questions: <https://dementiahelp.ca/>

Ottawa: 613-523-4004 **Renfrew-County:** 1-888-411-2067 | info@dsorc.org | DementiaHelp.ca

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