



Geriatric Fast Facts

Topic: Detection of Delirium

Delirium should *always be suspected* when an *acute or sub-acute deterioration* in behavior, cognition, or function occurs, especially in patients who are elderly, have dementia, or are depressed.

The diagnosis of delirium is clinical. Obtaining a thorough history is essential. The **Confusion Assessment Method (CAM)** is a simple tool that is helpful in the detection of delirium.

Since its development in 1990, the **CAM** has become the **most widely used** instrument for the detection of delirium world-wide, because of both its strong validation results as well as its ease of use.

The **CAM** can be administered in a matter of minutes. Minimal training is required. With the shortened version worksheet, the **CAM** is very easy to administer and interpret.

The shortened version of the **CAM** assesses the clinical features of delirium including:

- I. Acute and Fluctuating Course
- II. Inattention
- III. Disorganized Thinking
- IV. Altered Level of Consciousness

The **CAM** shortened version worksheet is attached.

..... More information regarding delirium and the CAM to follow.....