NEUROPSYCHOLOGICAL SERVICES FOR MULTICULTURAL PATIENTS

The new MGH Multicultural Assessment and Research Center (MARC) offers culturally and linguistically appropriate neuropsychological services, including cognitive testing and cognitive training (e.g., memory, attention & executive functions training) to adult patients with cognitive difficulties (e.g., mild cognitive impairment, epilepsy, learning disabilities, etc). The Center is directed by Yakeel T. Quiroz, PhD and Paula Aduen, PhD. Evaluations are currently available in English and Spanish.

Referrals can be placed via EPIC to: MGH MULTICULTURAL ASSESSMENT
WHAT IS A NEUROPSYCHOLOGICAL EVALUATION?

The neuropsychological evaluation is performance-based and examines the consequences of brain damage, brain disease, and mental health conditions. The evaluation consists of:

- Clinical interview with the patient and/or patient’s family member
- Administration of a battery of tests designed to evaluate different aspects of cognitive functioning (e.g., attention, memory, visuospatial abilities, executive functioning).
- Feedback session with the patient and/or patient’s family member to discuss results and recommendations based on the evaluation.

The neuropsychological evaluation can last from two to five hours, with patients given breaks throughout the evaluation as needed. At MARC, services are offered either in person or remotely.

STAFF SPOTLIGHT

Diana Munera, BS
Ms. Munera is a bilingual (English and Spanish) senior clinical coordinator at MARC. She joined Dr. Quiroz’s group in September 2019. She received her Bachelors of Science in Psychology from Northeastern University. Before joining MARC, Diana worked as a Practice Manager for another clinic at the MGH Psychiatry Department. Diana’s interest are: helping Latino families navigate the healthcare system. In her free time, she enjoys playing with her two toddlers, traveling and spending time with friends and family.
RESEARCH OPPORTUNITIES: BOSTON LATINO AGING STUDY-BLAST

We are conducting a study, funded by the NIH, to understand age-related memory changes in older Latino adults. The study is known as the Boston Latino Aging Study (BLAST). We are currently looking for participants older than 55, who are fluent in Spanish and do not have memory problems. **Anyone interested in participating can call Jairo or Diana at 617-643-5880 or email mapp@mgh.harvard.edu.**

TARDES LATINAS

This is an initiative to promote brain health among Latinos. It will be a monthly event that will combine brief presentations about brain health topics and fun/healthy activities. The first one will be on **May 7th at 4pm (EST)**. We will talk about memory, followed by a salsa and bachata class. The event will be in Spanish, free/virtual. **To join: https://partners.zoom.us/j/89382393928**

More info: mapp.mgh.harvard.edu

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BRAIN HEALTH Q & A

How does lifestyle (exercise, sleep) affect our ability to concentrate?

Attention helps us navigate demands to function in our daily activities. However, our resources to navigate these demands are limited and thus, vulnerable to both internal (e.g., energy level or emotional state) and external factors (e.g., background noise, or other distractors).

Attention can impact our memory if our attention resources are strained when learning new information or carrying out an activity. Sometimes, not being able to “remember” details of a conversation or “forgetting” a step when cooking may trigger memory concerns, but a closer look may reveal concentration difficulties that interfere with our ability to learn and recall new information.
BRAIN HEALTH (CONT.)
Implementing strategies to boost our attention can be beneficial to improve our memory, and in turn, our ability to carry out our daily tasks.

Exercise and sleep help the brain to stay in good shape and function better. Exercise has been proven to boost memory, attention and working memory, as well as other cognitive functions needed to plan, organize information and remember details.

By: Dr. Clara Vila-Castelar

PUBLICATIONS
Our staff contributed a chapter to the book "Facing Memory Loss and Dementia: A guide for patients and families", edited by Drs. Chemali & Stern from MGH Psychiatry.

We also published these articles:


Co-Directors:
Yakeel T. Quiroz, PhD
Paula Aduen, PhD

Neuropsychologists:
Clara Vila-Castelar, PhD
Edmarie Guzman-Velez, PhD

Clinical Research Coordinators:
Diana Munera, BS
Jairo Martinez, BA
Alex Badillo, BA
Paola Garza, MS

Research Fellows:
Enmanuelle Pardilla-Delgado, PhD
Dorothee Schoemaker, PhD
Joshua Fox-Fuller, MA
Celina Pluim, MA

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