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


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Citation

Authors' objectives
Cognitive impairment is a growing public health concern, and is one of the most distinctive characteristics of all dementias. The timely recognition of dementia syndromes can be beneficial, as some causes of dementia are treatable and are fully or partially reversible. Several automated cognitive assessment tools for assessing mild cognitive impairment (MCI) and early dementia are now available. Proponents of these tests cite as benefits the tests' repeatability and robustness and the saving of clinicians' time. However, the use of these tools to diagnose and/or monitor progressive cognitive impairment or response to treatment has not yet been evaluated. The aim of this review was to determine whether or not automated computerised tests could accurately identify patients with progressive cognitive impairment in MCI and dementia and, if so, to investigate their role in monitoring disease progression and/or response to treatment.

Authors' conclusions
The quantity of information available is insufficient to be able to make recommendations on the clinical use of the computerised tests for diagnosing and monitoring MCI and early dementia progression. The value of these tests also depends on the costs of acquisition, training, administration and scoring.

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