

# Delirium

- Delirium is a CNS disorder that is characterised by an acute decline in both the level of consciousness and cognition with particular impairment in attention
- Life threatening but can be reversible.
- Involves :-
  - Perceptual disturbances
  - Sleep cycle impairment
  - Abnormal psychomotor activity

# Symptoms of Delirium

- Impairment of consciousness
- Impairment of cognitive functions
- Abnormalities of mood, perception and behaviour
- Neurological - Tremor, asterixis, nystagmus, incoordination, urinary incontinence.

# Other names for Delirium

- Intensive care unit psychosis
- Acute confusional state
- Acute brain failure
- Encephalitis
- Encephalopathy
- Toxic metabolic state
- Central nervous system toxicity
- Paraneoplastic limbic encephalitis
- Sundowning
- Cerebral insufficiency
- Organic brain syndrome

Predisposing factors	Precipitating factors
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Old age and male gender</li><li>• Dementia, depression, hx of delirium</li><li>• Immobility, hx of falls</li><li>• Vision and hearing impairment</li><li>• Dehydration or malnutrition</li><li>• Drugs</li><li>• Medical comorbidity</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Drugs</li><li>• Primary neurological disorder - stroke, meningitis</li><li>• Environmental - ICU, Catheter, pain, emotional stress</li><li>• Prolonged sleep deprivation</li><li>• Intercurrent illness - infection</li><li>• Surgery</li></ul>

# Common causes of Delirium

- CNS disorder - epilepsy, migraine, head trauma
- Systemic illness - cardiac failure, infections, nutritional deficiency
- Intoxication or withdrawal from drugs or toxins
- Neoplasms
- Metabolic disorders

# Hypothesis for the neuropathogenesis of Delirium

- Neurotransmitter deficiency
- Network disconnectivity
- Inflammatory cytokines

# References

- The neuroinflammatory hypothesis of delirium, *Acta Neuropathologica*, 2010, Volume 119, Number 6, Page 737, Joaquim Cerejeira, Horácio Firmino, Adriano Vaz-Serra, Elizabeta B. Mukaetova-Ladinska
- Kaplan & Sadock's *Synopsis of Psychiatry*, 11th edition, *Neurocognitive Disorders*, Chapter 21, Page 694, Sadock, Benjamin J.