



American Brain Tumor Association

NEUROPSYCHOLOGY

Having a brain tumor presents a host of challenges in many areas of one's life. Changes can occur in your physical functioning, as well as cognitive (i.e. thinking) abilities. Skills such as your memory, language and reasoning can change. There can also be changes in how you are doing emotionally, as well as in your personality and behavior, all directly related due to the effects of the brain tumor. These changes can also be related to surgery, chemotherapy and radiation. Coping with these changes can place an additional strain on both patients and caregivers.

A neuropsychologist may be able to help. Neuropsychology is a sub-specialty of clinical psychology, specializing in the relationship between the brain, thinking, and behavior. A neuropsychologist has expertise in assessing and treating problems of cognitive skills, psychological functions and behavior, as they relate to the brain and central nervous system.

A neuropsychological evaluation involves meeting with the neuropsychologist to discuss your concerns and then going through a series of tests to get a good understanding of the types of difficulties that you may be experiencing and potential causes. The evaluation can give you a good sense of what is going on and help to guide treatment to improve your day to day functioning. A neuropsychological evaluation can last from a couple of hours to most of the day, depending on the patient and his or her individual needs. Treatment recommendations may include referrals for medications and/or therapies to address cognitive and emotional issue.

TO FIND A NEUROPSYCHOLOGIST

When seeking a neuropsychologist, one factor to consider is whether or not the psychologist is board certified. Board certification refers to the certificate received once post-training examinations have been successfully passed. This is a mark of high distinction in the profession. Your neurologist or neurosurgeon can help you find a board certified neuropsychologist. You can also contact the following professional organizations.

AMERICAN ACADEMY OF CLINICAL NEUROPSYCHOLOGY

www.theaacn.org

To locate a board certified neuropsychologist for children, adolescents or adults in your area.

AMERICAN BOARD OF PEDIATRIC NEUROPSYCHOLOGY

www.abpdn.org

To locate a board certified pediatric neuropsychologist in your area.

PROGRAMS FOR NEURO-COGNITIVE RETRAINING

Cognitive retraining programs are available to help individuals who have cognitive deficits. These programs can assist in the areas of attention, memory, information processing and executive functioning (decision making). A neuropsychologist can guide you in a training program. Some programs are offered at community colleges, as well as at major medical centers and universities.

ABTA RESOURCES

Our “Becoming Well Again Through...” series includes articles on Cognitive Retraining, Rehabilitative Medicine and Speech Pathology Services. These articles are available upon request from our office and at our web site at www.abta.org/index.cfm?contentid=147 We also offer information on strategies for improving memory.

ORGANIZATIONS AND WEB SITES

AMERICAN PSYCHOLOGICAL ASSOCIATION

Division 40: Clinical Neuropsychology

www.div40.org

Offers information about neuropsychology, links and resources.

BRAIN INJURY ASSOCIATION OF THE USA

800-444-6443

www.biausa.org

BIA has a network of more than 40 state affiliates, as well as hundreds of local chapters and support groups across the U.S. Providing information, education and support to assist those living with a brain injury and their family members.

NATIONAL ACADEMY OF NEUROPSYCHOLOGY

www.nanonline.org

Offer links to organizations, books and software.

NEUROPSYCHOLOGY CENTRAL

www.neuropsychologycentral.com

Offers basic information for the non-professional, literature, links to organizations, software and an internet forum.

Thanks to Aaron Malina, Ph.D, ABPP, Neuropsychology Service, NorthShore University HealthSystem for review of this resource.

This information is not intended as a substitute for professional medical advice and does not provide advice on treatments or conditions for individual patients. All health and treatment decisions must be made in consultation with your physician (s), utilizing your specific medical information. The American Brain Tumor Association does not endorse any of the organizations listed or guarantee that individuals will qualify for the services they provide. Please contact each organization for their specific guidelines.

April 2009