



## Consultants in Neurology

### Rowe Neurology Institute

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OR

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Your appointment is:

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Day

Date

Time

## Neuropsychological Testing

### Why have you been referred for a neuropsychological evaluation?

A neuropsychological evaluation is useful in obtaining several types of information. This evaluation may be of help:

- ❖ to find possible problems with your brain functioning,
- ❖ to assist in diagnosing,
- ❖ to define your brain-related strengths and weaknesses,
- ❖ to guide treatment for your personal, educational or professional needs,
- ❖ to make relevant recommendations to your health care provider(s), and/or
- ❖ to document possible changes in your functioning over time.
- ❖ **This test will take 3-4 hours**

### What is a neuropsychological evaluation?

A neuropsychological evaluation typically involves assessment with a group of standardized tests that are sensitive to the effects of brain dysfunction. Unlike CT or MRI scans which show abnormalities in the structure of the brain (or an EEG, which shows electrical abnormalities in the brain), neuropsychological assessment is used to show the ways in which a person can or cannot perform certain functions or tasks that are dependent upon certain brain activity. These functions or tasks (for example, memory and learning) form the necessary building blocks of successful living in the

individual's daily life. Impairments in many of these functions may exist because of subtle brain abnormalities that cannot be detected on CT or MRI scans. Therefore, neuropsychological assessment is a procedure with a unique purpose; it can be used to reveal or diagnose brain dysfunction when no structural brain abnormalities can be seen. Furthermore, when structural abnormalities have been found, neuropsychological assessment provides a way to determine what functions may be impaired because of the structural defects, and to determine the degree to which they may be impaired.

### **What tests are used?**

The standardized tests used in a neuropsychological evaluation typically assess functioning in the following areas: attention and memory, problem-solving and other complex abilities, visual-spatial functions, language functions, and motor functions. The types of tests you will take depend upon the questions you and your doctor have. Neuropsychological tests are not invasive (they do not involve attaching you to machines or using x-rays). Most of the tests will involve questions-and-answers, working with materials on a table and some tests may use a computer. Assessment of academic skill development and emotional functioning, while not exclusive to neuropsychological evaluations, are typically performed as well. Finally, a review of medical records and an interview with the individual and/or family member(s) is also typically included.

### **What is the outcome?**

The product or outcome of a neuropsychological evaluation is a conclusion or set of conclusions made about the individual's functioning. If requested, the product may also include specific recommendations to guide treatment or otherwise enhance the individual's functioning. The conclusions and recommendations are developed by integrating information obtained from the standardized testing, interviews, medical records and other observations. The psychologist, who is a licensed professional within the field of psychology with a specialty in the applied science of brain-behavior relationships, performs interpretation of the test results and the information obtained from other sources.