

Diagnosis of Delirium

DSM V

The DSM V is the fifth version of the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders. The DSM V defines the required criteria that a patient must meet to be diagnosed with a mental disorder. All recognized mental disorders are listed. The "Gold Standard" for the diagnosis of delirium is the criteria listed in the DSM V.

DSM V : Criteria for Diagnosis of Delirium

Criterion A: Disturbance in Attention and Awareness

This includes a reduced ability to focus, sustain, or shift attention, along with reduced awareness of the environment.

Criterion B: The disturbance develops over a short period (hours to days) and represents a change from baseline attention and awareness, **fluctuating in severity during day.**

Criterion C: Additional disturbance in cognition

This can manifest as memory deficits, disorientation, language problems, visuospatial ability issues, or perceptual disturbances.

Criterion D: *Disturbances are not better explained by another pre-existing, established or evolving neurocognitive disorder.*

Criterion E: There evidence from the history, physical examination, or laboratory findings that the disturbance is a direct physiological consequence of another medical condition, substance intoxication or withdrawal, or exposure to a toxin, or is due to multiple etiologies.

Dementia, depression and mental disorders can produce signs and symptoms that make the diagnosis of delirium more challenging. As well, patients can develop delirium on top of a baseline of dementia or a mental disorder.

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