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Amnesia

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Definition

Amnesia refers to the loss of ability to recall facts, events, or concepts encountered prior to the onset of illness (retrograde amnesia) or to the loss of the ability to form new memories (anterograde amnesia), or both. Although anterograde and retrograde amnesia can each occur in isolation, they frequently appear together following a single cause. The cause is commonly an organic neurologic insult or illness, but it can also be

psychogenic. Although in most organic cases the memory loss is permanent, it can also be temporary, as for example in transient global amnesia.

Cross-References

- ▶ [Anterograde Amnesia](#)
- ▶ [Memory Impairment](#)
- ▶ [Retrograde Amnesia](#)
- ▶ [Transient Global Amnesia](#)

References and Readings

Baddeley, A. D., Kopelman, M. D., & Wilson, A. W. (2002). *The handbook of memory disorders*. Chichester: Wiley.