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Disorientation

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Definition

Disorientation is an alteration of mental status characterized by lack of awareness of personal identity, place, time, and/or situation. Typically, disorientation occurs first in time, then in place, and finally in person. It is assessed by asking the person specific questions in these spheres. Disorientation is a relatively nonspecific symptom occurring in diffuse disorders (i.e., dementia), focal brain lesions (i.e., stroke), and infectious

and metabolic processes, secondary to medications and drug interactions, and in psychological disorders (i.e., schizophrenia). After diagnosis of the underlying cause, treatment generally involves the use of compensatory strategies such as calendars and clocks.

Cross-References

- ▶ [Galveston Orientation and Amnesia Test](#)
- ▶ [Mental Status Examination](#)
- ▶ [Mini-Mental State Exam](#)
- ▶ [Modified Mini-Mental State Examination](#)
- ▶ [Orientation](#)