CLINICAL DIAGNOSIS OF ALZHEIMER'S DISEASE: REPORT OF THE NINCDS-ADRDA WORK GROUP UNDER THE AUSPICES OF DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES TASK FORCE ON ALZHEIMER'S DISEASE

Guy McKhann, MD; David Drachman, MD; Marshall Folstein, MD; Robert Katzman, MD; Donald Price, MD; Emanuel M. Stadlan, MD

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Clinical criteria for the diagnosis of Alzheimer's disease include insidious onset and progressive impairment of memory and other cognitive functions. There are no motor, sensory, or coordination deficits early in the disease. The diagnosis cannot be determined by laboratory tests. These tests are important primarily in identifying other possible causes of dementia that must be excluded before the diagnosis of Alzheimer's disease may be made with confidence. Neuropsychological tests provide confirmatory evidence of the diagnosis of dementia and help to assess the course and response to therapy. The criteria proposed are intended to serve as a guide for the diagnosis of probable, possible, and definite Alzheimer's disease; these criteria will be revised as more definitive information becomes available.

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Comment from David S. Knopman, MD, FAAN, Deputy Editor: This highly cited paper presents diagnostic criteria, but these have been foundational for the field. The NINCDS-ADRDA criteria for AD dementia have stood up over the last 27 years—they are still fundamentally valid and well-framed.

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Guy McKhann, David Drachman, Marshall Folstein, et al.

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