



Supporting people with chronic alcohol dependence

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Arch.



Session overview



Quiz

'Top tips'
presentation

Small group
discussion of
case studies

Topic focus: alcohol related liver cirrhosis and brain injury

Q 1. Units

Recommended maximum
weekly intake: 14 units

1 pint of 'regular' lager (2 units)

250 ml glass of 12% wine (3 units)

1 single measure of spirits (1 unit)

440 ml can of 'super strength'
lager (4 units)

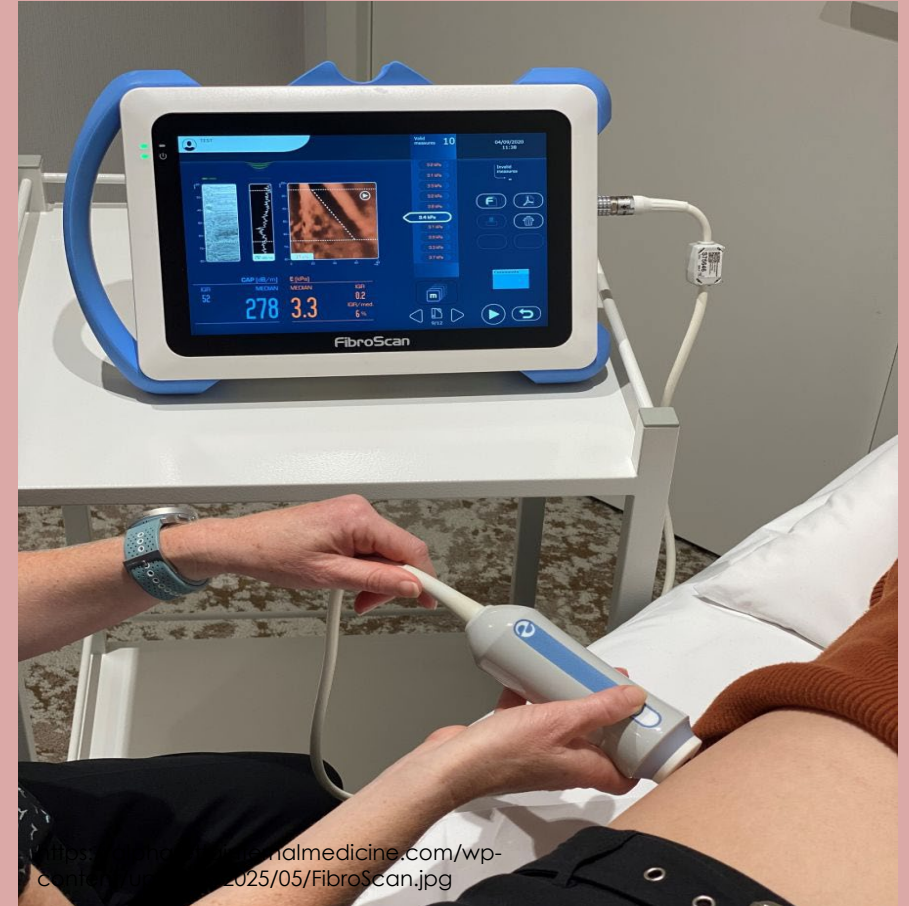
Q2&3: fibroscans

Recommended for:

- Men regularly drinking more than **50 units a week**
- Women regularly drinking more than **35 units a week**

Measure liver fatty infiltration and fibrosis (**scarring**)

Quick and painless, portable device



<https://www.hospitalmedicine.com/wp-content/uploads/2025/05/FibroScan.jpg>

Q4: thiamine, **thiamine**, **THIAMINE**

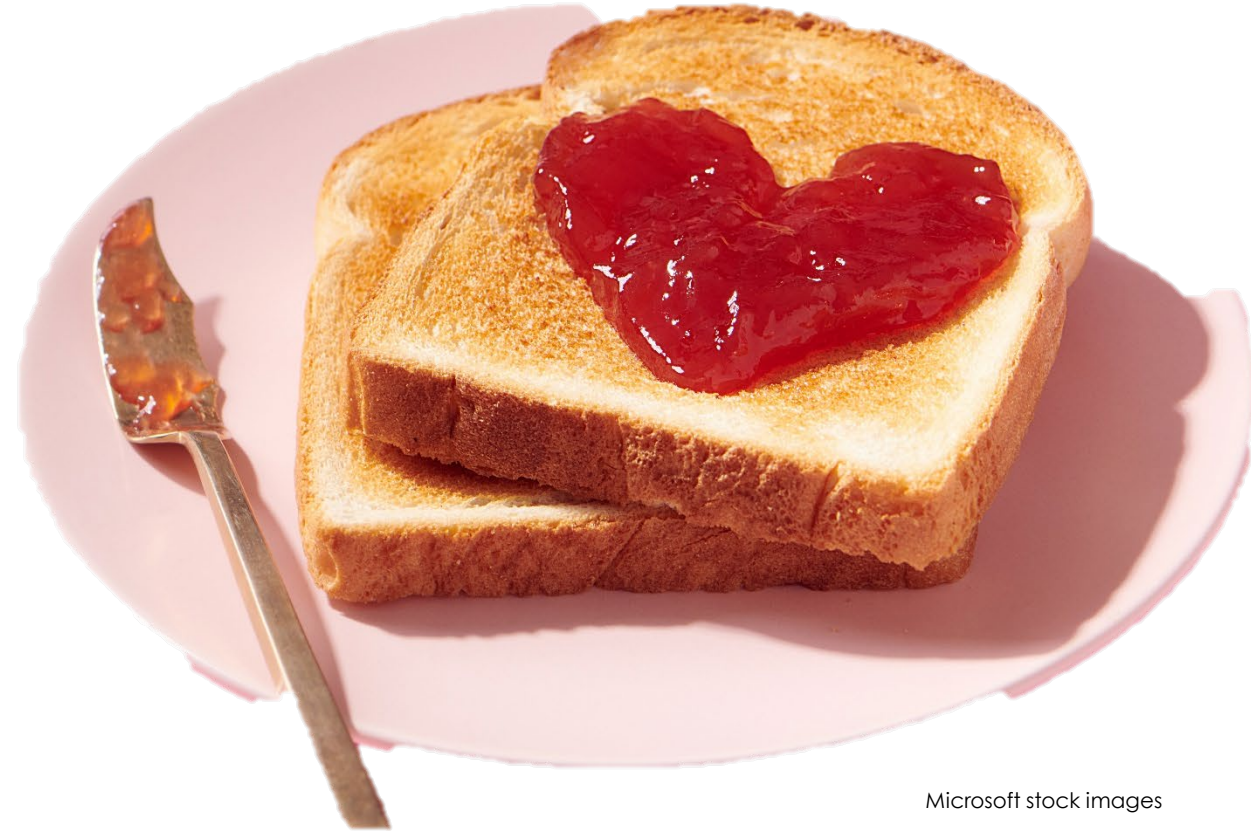
- Thiamine is a **crucial** vitamin (B1)
- Often deficient (poor appetite / diet, chronic gut inflammation)
- Thiamine **helps to protect the brain** and nerves
- Deficiency related to the development of alcohol related brain damage (ARBD)
- Shortages of Pabrinex



<https://arhealthnutrition.co.uk/cdn/shop/products/sipco-vitamin-b1-100mg-thiamine-100-tablets-vegetarian-arc-health-nutrition-uk-ltd-1.jpg?v=1753527061>

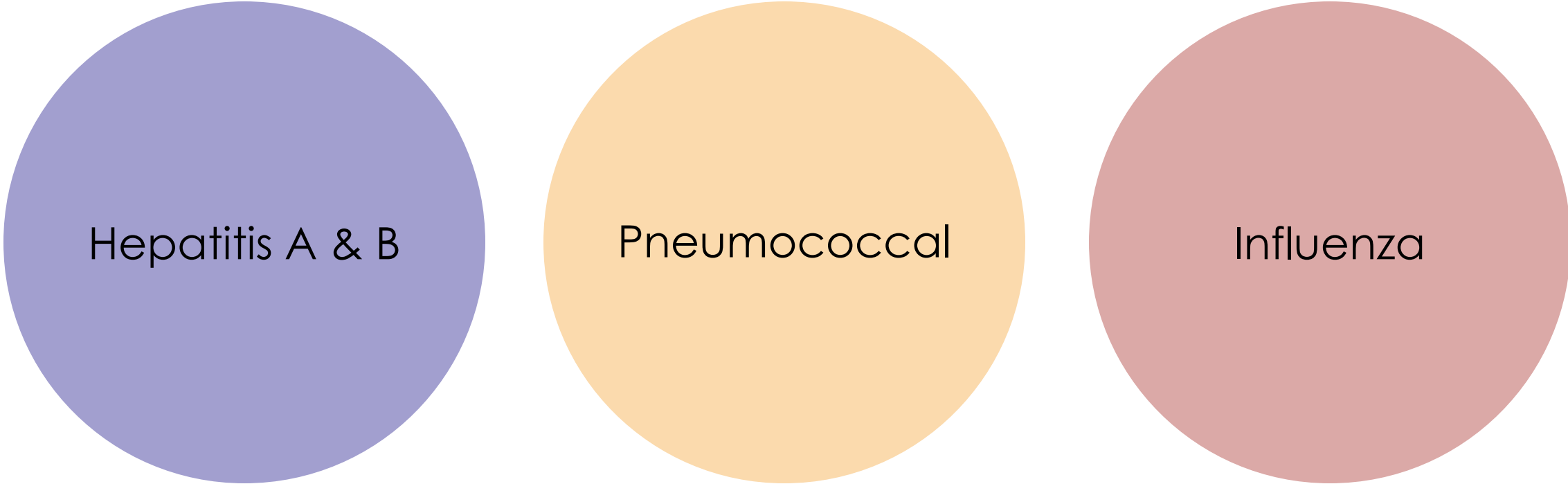
Q5. 50g carb bedtime snack

- People with cirrhosis have **reduced** ability to store energy
- Starvation state develops more quickly
- Need a **carbohydrate snack before bed**
- **Protein** also important to maintain muscle mass
- Added salt not recommended



Microsoft stock images

Q6. Vaccinations (true)



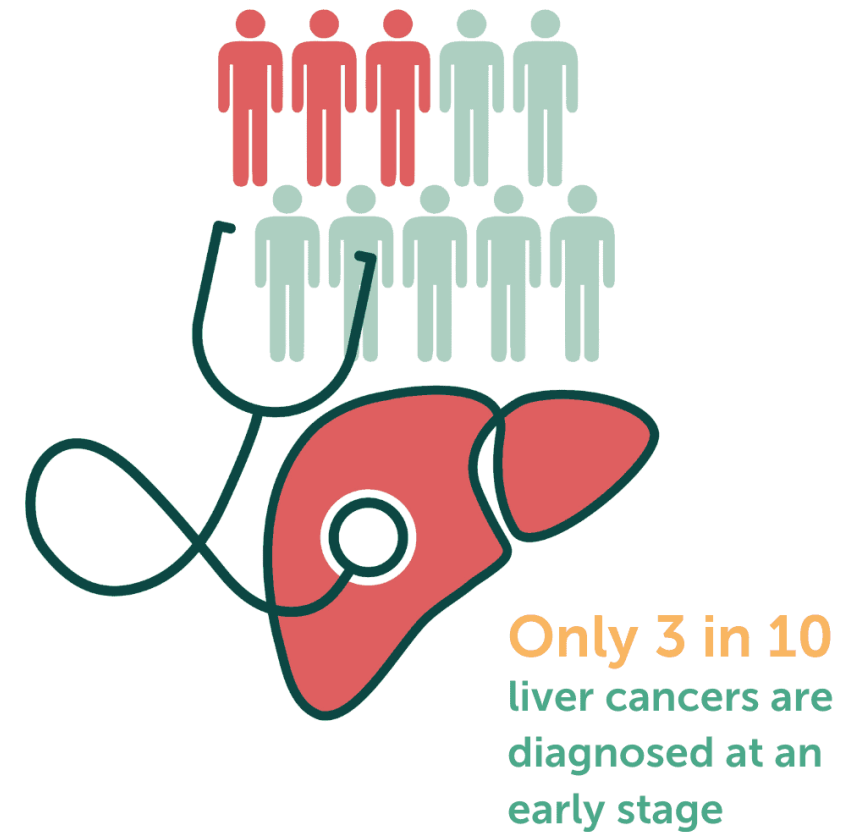
Hepatitis A & B

Pneumococcal

Influenza

Q7. false – 6 monthly checks for liver cancer

- Most people with cirrhosis should have **six monthly** checks for hepatocellular carcinoma (HCC).
- This involves an **ultrasound** and **blood test** (AFP).
- Hepatology nurses run a specific clinic.
- We need to **diagnose** more at an **early** stage.



<https://livercanceruk.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/04/Early-diagnosis.png>

Q 8. Complications of liver cirrhosis

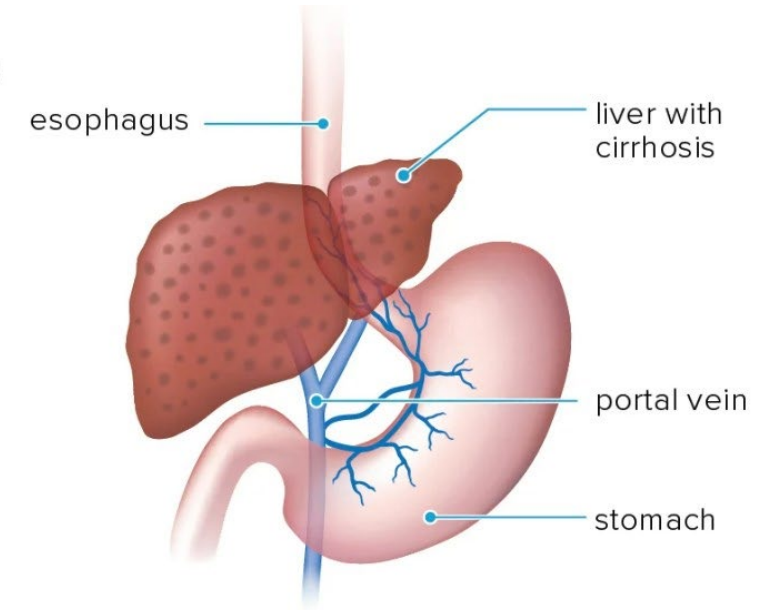
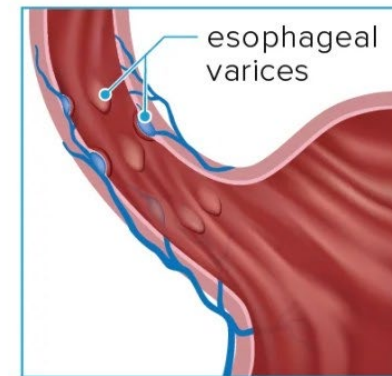
All of the above

- Fluid in abdomen (**ascites**)
- Abnormal blood vessels around food pipe (**varices**)
- Turning yellow (**jaundice**)
- Confusion from toxin build up (**encephalopathy**)
- Weaker bones (osteoporosis)
- Infection / sepsis

Q9. Preventing variceal bleeds

- Scarring interferes with the flow of blood through the liver → **abnormal blood vessels** (varices) develop.
- Varices are found on **camera tests** into the stomach (endoscopy).
- Beta blocker drugs e.g. **carvedilol** reduce pressure and risk of bleeding.
- **Banding** also reduces bleeding risk.

Esophageal Varices

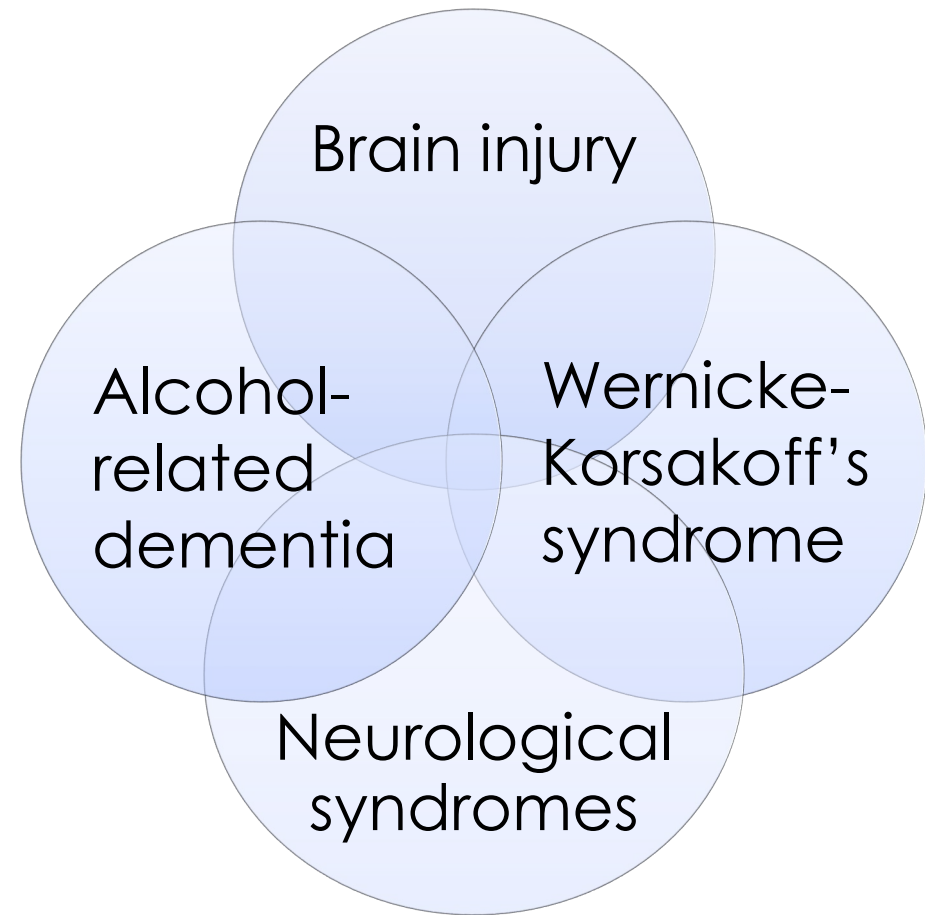


MEDICALNEWSTODAY

<https://www.medicalnewstoday.com/articles/esophageal-varices>

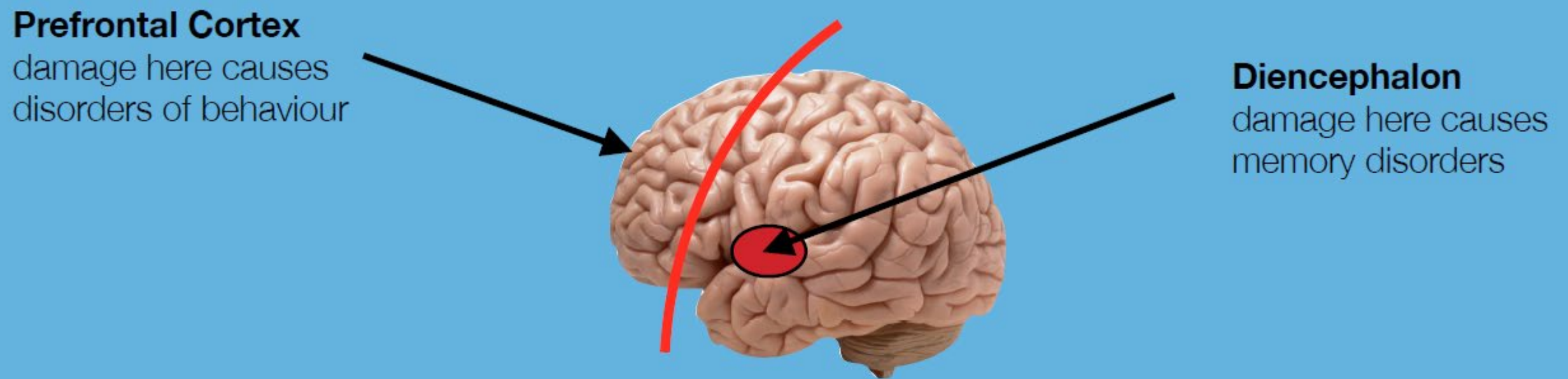
Q10. False – est. **35%**
show signs of ARBD

ARBD: an **umbrella term** for the damage that can happen to the brain due to long-term heavy drinking.



Adapted from Alcohol Change UK

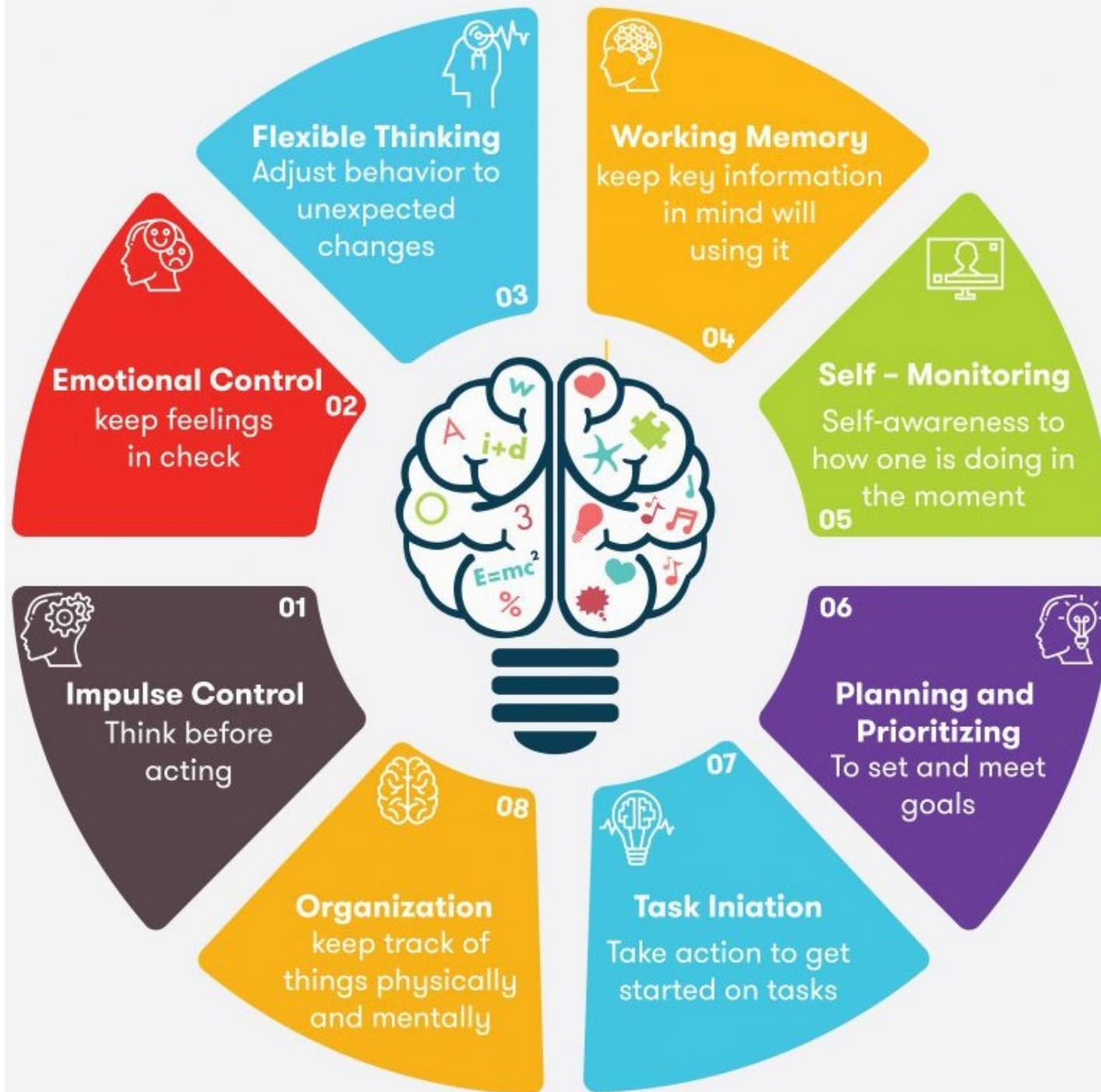
What are the symptoms...?



The first problem noticed tends to be the memory disorders but the behaviour disorders tend to develop first.

(Lewis, 2015)

Executive function

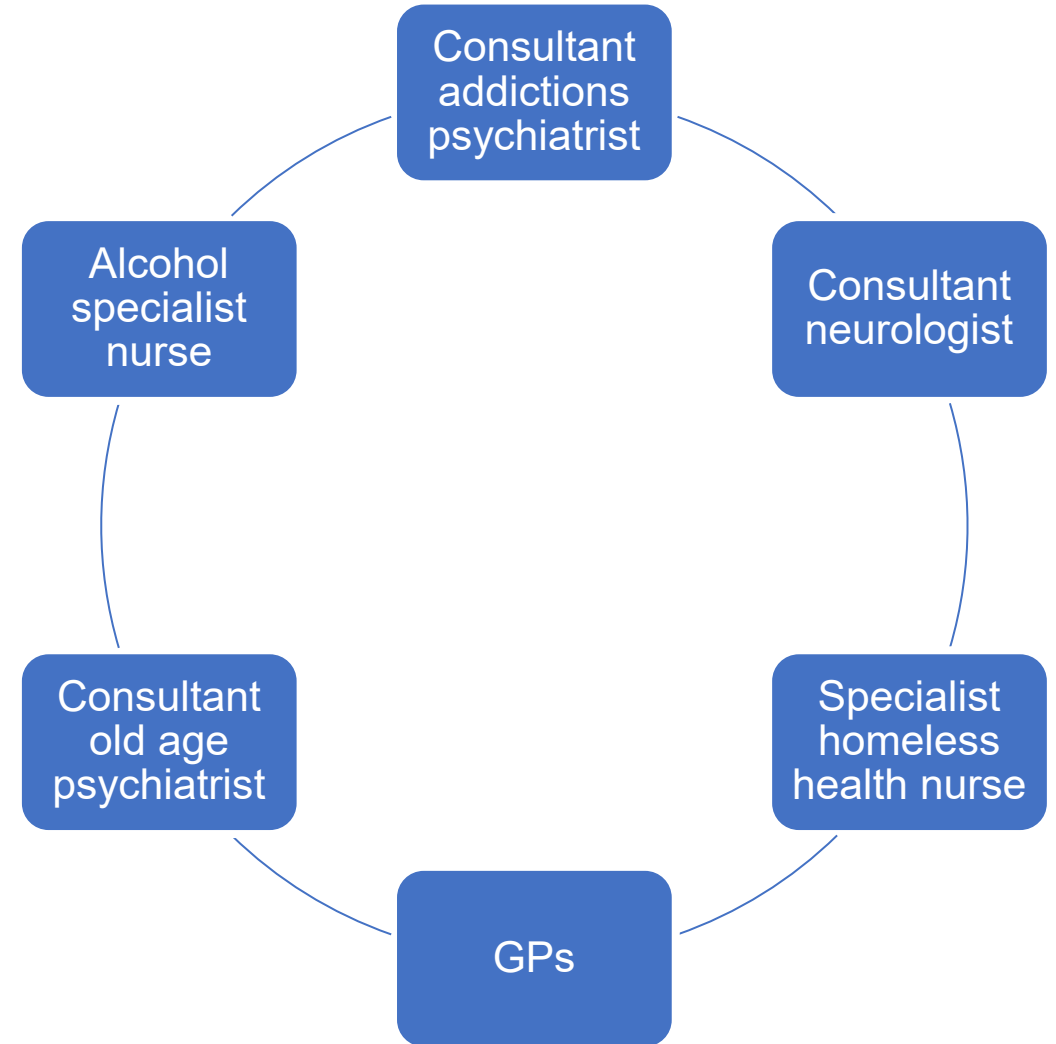


Arch MDT

Referral:

- Collateral history.
- Cognitive assessment.
- Brain imaging.

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Thank you
Any Questions?

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References

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