

# Post-Traumatic Amnesia Management

## What is Post-Traumatic Amnesia (PTA)?

Post traumatic amnesia may occur after a period of unconsciousness as a result of a traumatic brain injury. Your loved one may present with memory loss and have difficulty forming new memories of day-to-day events. These changes may be temporary and wean off over time depending on the severity of the head injury.



## Signs and Symptoms of PTA:

### Cognitive

- Confusion and Disorientation
- Agitation and Irritability
- Altered Mood and Paranoia
- Reduced Self-Awareness

### Physical

- Physical and Verbal Aggression
- Restlessness and Wandering
- Appears to be Tired Easily
- Altered Sleep Patterns

## How do you know when your loved one is getting better or improving?

- PTA may be temporary and the duration varies from person to person
- PTA may be resolving when you notice your loved one becoming oriented and being able to start forming new memories day-to-day

## How can you help?

### Avoid Overstimulation



To avoid overwhelming your loved one, it's recommended to limit visitation to two people at a time



To help your loved one rest, reduce bedside noise and turn off the TV/radio



Keep visitation short and let your loved one rest when you notice them getting tired

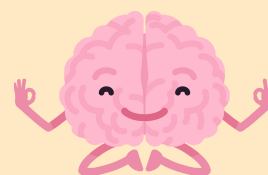


Avoiding arguing or becoming upset as it may increase agitation and distress

### Be Patient

There may be delayed responses when speaking to your loved one, allow them time to think and wait for 1-2 minutes and then repeat your questions.

If you notice your loved one becoming upset with you during the conversation. Stop the conversation and remain calm.



### Provide Frequent Orientation

Orientate your loved one to:

- Where they are (i.e Woodlands Health)
- What time it is
- Who is around them (i.e family, friends, nurses and doctors)
- Use familiar objects such as family photos, familiar soft toys and music to orientate them!

#### Quick Tips

A clock and large calendar with days marked off at bedside can help keep your loved one orientated when you're not there with them.

Contributed by Occupational Therapy, Rehabilitation, Allied Health Services

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