

Dementia and effort test performance

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Abstract

Research on the performance of patients with dementia on tests of effort is particularly limited. We examined archival data from 214 non-litigating patients with dementia on 18 effort indices derived from 12 tests (WAIS-III/WAIS-R Digit Span and Vocabulary, Dot Counting Test, Warrington Recognition Memory Test-Words, WMS-III Logical Memory, Rey Word Recognition Memory Test, Finger Tapping, b-Test, Rey 15-Item, Test of Memory Malingering, Rey Auditory Verbal Learning Test, and Rey Complex Figure Test). Results indicated that recommended cut-offs for Digit Span indicators (Vocabulary Minus Digit Span and four-digit forward span time score) provided $\geq 90\%$ specificity across participants, while the majority of other effort tests displayed specificities in the 30-70% range. Analyses of test specificity as a function of Mini Mental Status Examination (MMSE) score and specific dementia diagnosis are provided, as well as adjustments to cut-offs to maintain specificity where feasible.

Keywords: Effort; Dementia; Malingering; Noncredible; Alzheimer's; Geriatric

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