

Managing Hallucinations in Dementia



The Geriatric Medicine service provides inpatient and outpatient specialist care to older persons aged 75 years and above. Specialist assessment and individualised holistic management are offered to elderly with bladder and bowel-control problems, memory, mood and behavioural problems and multiple falls or difficulty walking. Patients are cared for by a multi-disciplinary team comprising doctors, nurses, physiotherapists, occupational therapists, speech therapists, dietitians, pharmacists, podiatrists and medical social workers, where necessary.

What is Hallucination?

Hallucination occurs when a person “sees”, “hears”, “smells”, “tastes” or even “feels” something that is not there. For example, he/she may “see” insects crawling on their hands or “hear” voices talking to them.

Causes of Hallucination

- Disease progression of dementia (usually in the later stages)
- Medical conditions such as infection, pain, stroke or other discomfort
- Dehydration
- Medication such as sleeping pills
- Lack of sleep
- Sudden environment change e.g. attending a new day care centre or rotating to another person’s home for care



Responding to Hallucination

- Assess the situation and determine if hallucination is a problem. Is it upsetting you or the person, or causing the person to do something dangerous? Is an unfamiliar face making him/her frightened?
- React calmly and quickly with comforting words in a supportive manner.
- Do not argue with the person about what he or she sees or hears.
- If the behaviour is not dangerous, there is no need to intervene.
- If there are suspected underlying physical or psychiatric problems, bring the person to a doctor and review the drugs he/she is taking.
- Distract the situation by:
 - Suggesting a walk or going to another room
 - Moving to well-lit areas. Frightening hallucinations often go away in well-lit areas and when there are people around
 - Turning their attention to music or engaging them in conversation or activities they enjoy



- Modify the environment by:
 - Checking for sounds that could be misinterpreted e.g. noise from the television or air conditioner
 - Looking out for lights that cast shadows, reflections or distortions on the floors, walls or furniture. Turn on lights to reduce shadows
- Cover mirrors with a cloth or remove them to avoid confusion for the person. He/she may think a stranger is looking at him/her



Notes:

Notes:

For more information

Ng Teng Fong General Hospital and Jurong Community Hospital

1 Jurong East St 21, Singapore 609606

www.ntfgh.com.sg | www.jch.com.sg

Clinic opening hours

Monday – Friday: 8.30am – 5.30pm

Saturday: 8.30am – 12.30pm (Selected clinics only*)

Dental Clinic: Monday – Thursday: 8.00am – 5.30pm, Friday: 8.00am – 5.00pm

*Please refer to our websites for more details.

General enquiries & appointments

General enquiries line: 6908 2222 (24-hr)

Fax: 6716 5500 | Email: contactus@nuhs.edu.sg

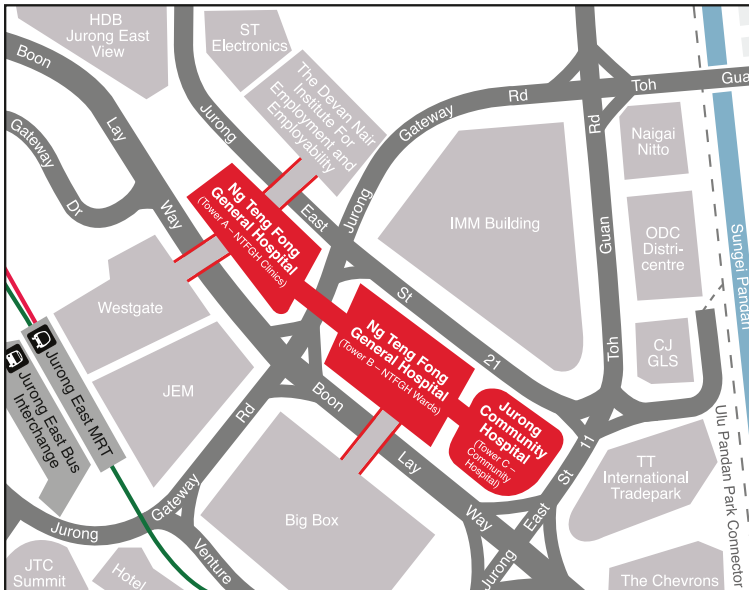
Appointment line: 6908 2222 (Monday – Friday: 8.00am – 5.30pm, Saturday: 8.00am – 12.30pm)

Fax: 6716 2200 | Email: appointment@nuhs.edu.sg

Dental appointment line: 6716 2233 (Monday – Friday: 8.00am – 5.30pm)

Fax: 6716 2200 | Email: JHCampus_Dental@nuhs.edu.sg

Getting there



By train

Alight at Jurong East MRT Station

By bus

Jurong East Bus Interchange

41, 49, 51, 52, 66, 66B, 78, 78A, 79, 79A, 97, 97E, 98, 98M, 105, 143, 143M, 160, 160A, 160M, 183, 183B, 197, 333, 334, 335, 506

Along Boon Lay Way

49, 99, 333, Private bus service 625, 990

Disclaimer:

The information in this brochure is meant for educational purposes and should not be used as a substitute for medical diagnosis or treatment. Please seek your doctor's advice before starting any treatment or if you have any questions related to your health, physical fitness or medical condition. Information is accurate at the time of printing.