

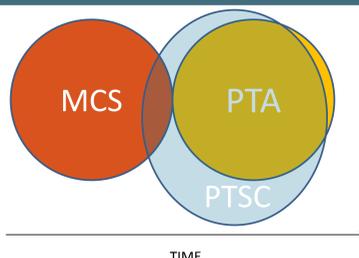
I AM SO CONFUSED: THE CONCEPT OF POST TRAUMATIC CONFUSIONAL STATE IN DISORDERS OF CONSCIOUSNESS AFTER TRAUMATIC BRAIN INJURY

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Common Definitions in Disorders of Consciousness in Brain Injury

Minimally Conscious State (MCS):
condition of severely altered consciousness in which minimal but definite behavioural evidence of self or environmental awareness is demonstrated.⁴ Criteria for emergence from MCS:
1. Functional interactive communication.
2. Functional use of 2 different objects.⁴

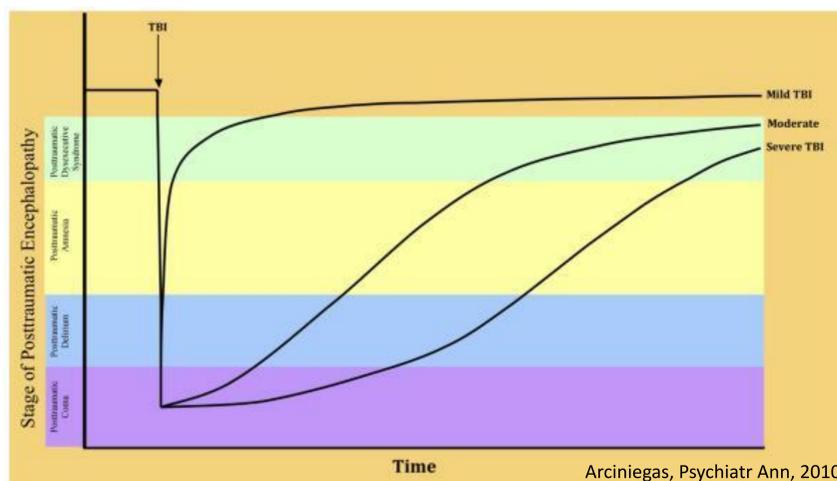


Post Traumatic Amnesia (PTA):
represents a stage of recovery during which one's orientation and memory for ongoing events remains poor.⁷

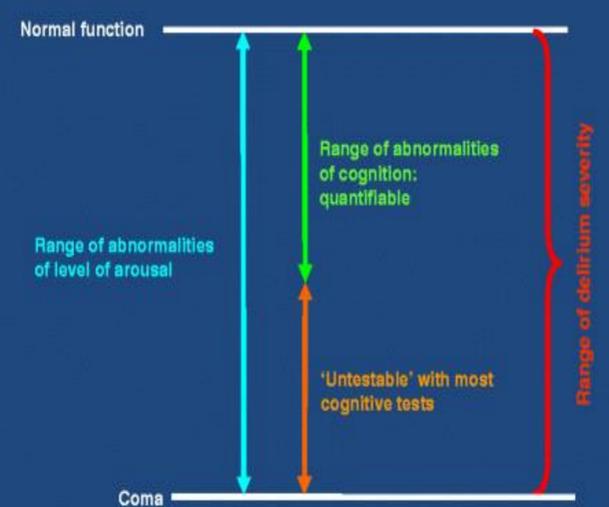
Posttraumatic Confusional State (PTCS):
“A confusional state can be defined as a transient organic mental syndrome with acute onset characterized by a global impairment of cognitive functions with a concurrent disturbance of consciousness, **attentional abnormalities**, reduced or increased psychomotor activity, and a disrupted sleep wake cycle.”¹⁰

Typical pattern of recovery in TBI

Once responsiveness is established, early recovery usually includes: impaired attention, disorientation, emotional lability, disinhibition –verbal, physical, sexual, including agitation and aggression. Fluctuating symptoms, sleep disturbances, decreased daytime arousal and perceptual disturbances.²



Overlap between hypoactive delirium and reduced arousal states



Davis, D *BMC Medicine* 2014, 12:141

Discussion

PTCS does not differ from delirium.

DSM-V criteria:

- Disturbance in attention* (i.e., reduced ability to direct, focus, sustain, and shift attention) and awareness (reduced orientation to the environment).
- Develops over a short period of time (usually hours to a few days), acute change from baseline, fluctuate in severity.
- Additional disturbance in cognition (e.g., memory deficit, disorientation, language, visuospatial ability, or perception).
- Disturbances are not explained by a pre-existing, established or evolving neurocognitive disorder and do not occur in the context of a severely reduced level of arousal such as coma.
- Evidence that the disturbance is a direct physiological consequence of another medical condition.

PTA may be an insufficient to describe post-TBI confusion.

- PTA is a proxy term for the complex multidimensional cognitive and neuro-behavioural deficits present in TBI recovery.
- Current PTA scales capture only orientation and memory; they do not distinguish pure amnesic syndromes; nor capture resolution or continuation of other symptoms.⁸

Recognition of PTCS after TBI

- PTCS may be a more meaningful and accurate term to encompass the broad range of cognitive and behavioural disturbances after TBI.
- All PTCS symptoms should be assessed and addressed.

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