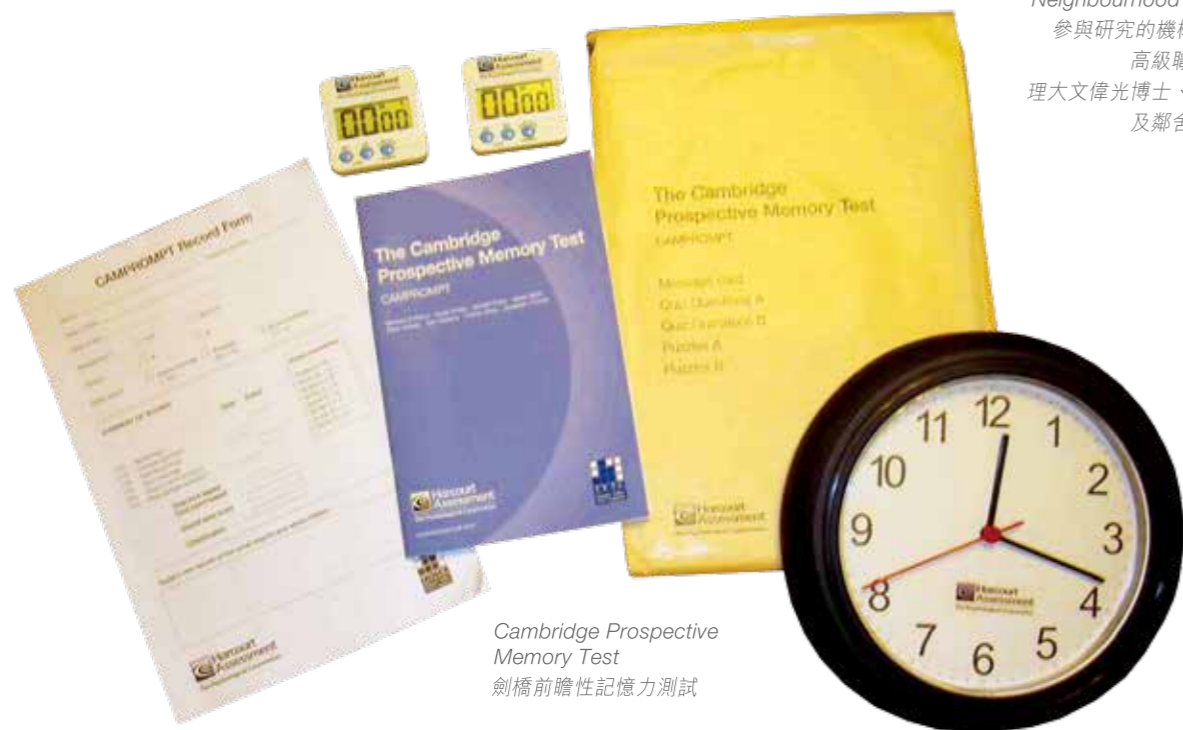


Life Sciences 生命科學

Forgetting to remember things?

善忘？



Cambridge Prospective Memory Test
劍橋前瞻性記憶力測試

Representatives of the organizations participating in the two studies: (from left) Ms Grace Lee, Senior Occupational Therapist at Kwai Chung Hospital; Dr David Man of PolyU; Mr Yuen Siu Lam, Chairman of the Self Help Group for the Brain Damaged; and Mr Francis Li, Manager of The Neighbourhood Advice-Action Council
參與研究的機構代表：(左起)葵涌醫院高級職業治療師李月英女士、理大文偉光博士、慧進會主席袁少林先生及鄰舍輔導會經理李蔭國先生

Research suggests that many people in Hong Kong experience difficulties with prospective memory, that is, with “not remembering to remember to take action”. Accordingly, they are unable to perform an intended action at a particular future point in time.

一項研究發現，香港人普遍存在「前瞻性記憶」的問題，即「忘記要記起去辦事」，因此，他們無法在未來某個特定的時間去做應做的事項。

A research team led by Associate Professor David Man, head of the Cognitive Rehabilitation Laboratory at PolyU's Department of Rehabilitation Sciences, recently conducted two prospective memory-related studies with the support of Kwai Chung Hospital, Kowloon Hospital, The Neighbourhood Advice-Action Council and The Self Help Group for the Brain Damaged.

The first study, which used the standardized Comprehensive Prospective Memory Questionnaire, involved 231 elderly participants, and the results were compared with those of 140 younger individuals. The results revealed that memory problems worsen with age. Similar findings were found in another study, which included 104 patients with stroke and 39 with brain injury. The two patient groups were of a similar age range and demographic background to healthy controls, but had more severe memory problems. Individuals with more prospective memory failures tended to be more affected in Instrumental Activities of Daily Living (which includes such activities as shopping, communication and appointment) than in Basic Activities of Daily Living (which includes such activities as self-care and household chores). On the basis of this study's findings, the researchers computed a cut-off score for screening adults aged 55 or above with declining cognitive ability who may develop dementia in the long run.

The second study used the Cambridge Prospective Memory Test to objectively evaluate a sample of 40 stroke patients (aged 25 to 65) in comparison with 44 age-matched participants of normal health. The findings showed a similar pattern of memory failures associated with advancing age and disability factors.

There are three types of prospective memory: time-, event- and activity-based prospective memory. In time-based prospective memory, the intended action is to be performed at a specific time, whereas in event-based prospective memory, it is to be performed when an external cue appears. Activity-based prospective memory is similar to event-based, but involves no interruption of ongoing tasks. Upon completion of a given activity, it triggers another memory activity.

Both studies found time-based prospective memory to be more easily affected than event-based. The former is associated with basic attention and the executive function of the prefrontal lobe of the brain.

理 大康復治療科學系副教授兼認知康復實驗室主任文偉光博士領導的研究團隊，在葵涌醫院、九龍醫院、鄰舍輔導會和慧進會的支持下，進行了兩項相關的研究。

第一項研究的對象包括二百三十一位長者和一百四十位較年輕的人士，統一採用標準的綜合前瞻性記憶問卷調查，並將兩組的答案進行比較。結果顯示，年齡越大，記憶問題越嚴重。類似的結果亦出現在一百零四位年齡和背景相若的中風患者和三十九位腦創傷患者身上，而與健康的人相比，這群人的問題更為嚴重。那些有更多前瞻性記憶問題的人，其日常獨立活動能力(如購物、溝通和約會等)比自我照顧能力(如自理和家務等)更受影響。研究人員以該研究為基礎，計算出劃界分數，並找出年齡在五十五歲或以上、有認知能力下降問題的成年人，長遠而言有可能患上腦退化症。

第二項研究對四十位中風患者(年齡介乎二十五至六十五歲)與另外四十四位年齡相近的健康人士，以「劍橋前瞻性記憶測試」進行客觀評估。結果顯示，他們因年事漸高及病患因素，亦出現類似的記憶衰退問題。

前瞻性記憶分為三種類型：「時間性前瞻記憶」，即預定行動應在特定時間完成；「事件性前瞻記憶」，即預定行動應在相關事件出現時完成；「活動性前瞻記憶」，它與「事件性前瞻記憶」類似，但不阻礙眼前要做的事，當某一活動完成後會啟動另一個記憶行動。

該研究發現，「時間性前瞻記憶」比「事件性前瞻記憶」更易受到影響，它可能與個人的基本注意力有關，並牽涉到大腦前額葉的執行功能。

