

Working Memory Training

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Cogmed is an intensive computer-based treatment intervention, for children and adults. There are three versions of the program: Cogmed JM for 5-9 year olds, Cogmed RM for 7 years old and up, and Cogmed QM for adults. The program is completed at home over a 5-week period with coaching support from trained staff members, who work under the direction of a physician or psychologist.

Cogmed is designed to improve Working Memory, now known to be a key deficit in many individuals with ADHD, learning disorders, reading comprehension & math difficulties, cognitive slowing, and other problems. Working Memory is a function of the brain that helps an individual temporarily store and manage information required to carry out complex thinking tasks. In daily life, working memory is used for things as diverse as remembering instructions, solving problems, controlling impulses, social skills, focus, and attention.

The Cogmed Program was developed in Stockholm at the prestigious Karolinska Institute, known for cutting-edge medical treatments and research. The research on the Cogmed Intervention Program, some of which has already been published in leading scientific and medical journals, shows clinically significant improvements in the functioning of individuals who complete the training program. Research is ongoing in Sweden, as well as in the United States at Notre Dame, Harvard, Stanford and NYU. Information about the research is available on the Cogmed website at www.cogmed.com.

The actual treatment program involves *at-home computer-based training for 30-45 minutes daily, 5 days a week, for 5 weeks*. The exercises are similar to computer games, but the computer adjusts the level of difficulty (through internet synchronization with a large data base) so the child or adult is always pushing him or herself. The parents, or other caregivers, will be taught the necessary techniques and strategies to be a “training aide” to their child in order to obtain the maximum benefits from the program. Additionally, the Cogmed coach will be providing weekly telephone contact to assist parents and will be tracking daily progress by continuously analyzing performance data. The program requires a commitment to adhering to a consistent training schedule in order to get the optimal results.

Improvement ranges from moderately good to excellent, in terms of “real world” functioning. In some cases, results are apparent as early as the third or fourth week of training. In other cases, however, results emerge slowly and begin to become apparent only after training is completed. One of the most exciting aspects of the training is that results are long-lasting: over 80% of those who improve either maintain their gains or actually *continue to improve over time* at one-year follow-up. For those who backslide a bit, a 3-week booster program is available.