

## **COGNITIVE AGNOSIA: AN UNDERDIAGNOSED CAUSE OF CONTROVERSIES**

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"There is no-one so blind, as he who does not want to see", goes a popular saying. Regrettably, it applies even to highly accomplished and intelligent physicians and researchers. Additionally, where knowledge fails controversies thrive. While good data often settle controversies, the same cannot be said about "cognitive agnosia", i.e. the inability to recognize relevant knowledge.

The following are but two examples: Cerebrovascular and Alzheimer disease; Neurogenic and cardiac causes of sudden death.

Cerebrovascular disease often coincides and at times interacts with Alzheimer disease and underlying Alzheimer disease contributes to the outcome of stroke patients. Despite the growing evidence for this, most stroke doctors have little interest in cognitive aspects of their patients and Alzheimer doctors have even less interest and knowledge about stroke. This is despite the fact that cerebrovascular and Alzheimer disease share the same vascular risk factors.

Although neurogenic sudden death is a well established phenomenon in the neurological literature, the recent American Heart Association 98 page guidelines on sudden death do not make a single reference to the brain.

Controversies fuel discussion and if conducted constructively, can lead us on the road to resolving them. However, in order to address controversies we needed to refine our diagnoses. In addition to the lack of uncontrovertible data, we need to add "cognitive agnosia" as a cause of controversies and begin addressing it.