Instructions on using the Delirium Triage Screen

The Delirium Triage Screen (DTS) was developed to rapidly rule-out delirium and reduce the need for formal delirium assessments. It takes less than 20 seconds to perform and consists of two components:

1) Level of consciousness as measured by the Richmond Agitation Sedation Scale (RASS).
2) Inattention by spelling the word "LUNCH" backwards.

If the patient has a RASS of 0 (normal level of consciousness) or makes 0 or 1 errors on “LUNCH” backwards spelling test, then the DTS is considered negative. Because the DTS is 98% sensitive, delirium is ruled out in this case and no additional delirium testing is needed. If the patient has a RASS other than 0 (altered level of consciousness) or makes >1 error on the “LUNCH” backwards spelling test, then the DTS is considered positive. Because the DTS is 55% specific, confirmatory testing is needed using the bCAM or CAM to rule in delirium.

Reference