

Bladder Infection or Something Else?

Four things we do in the first 24-48 hours in long-term care

If a resident's behaviour or health changes and they don't show the minimum signs of a bladder infection, we need to check for other causes. To make sure we understand what's happening, here is our plan for the first 24-48 hours:

1 Check what's changed:

LOOK FOR:

- Changes in thinking/memory
- Tiredness/low energy
- Feeling weak
- Falls
- General discomfort/feeling unwell
- Mood change/increase in aggression
- Less ability to perform activities (functional status)

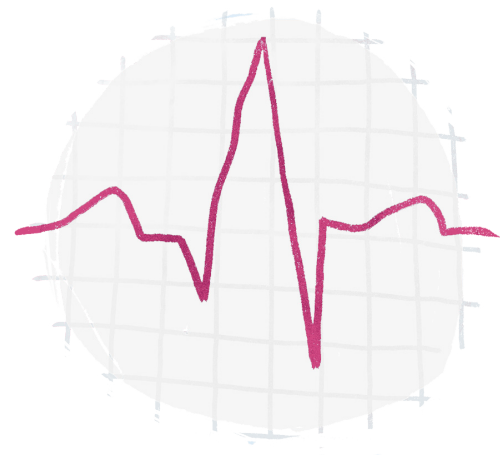
SEE IF THESE ARE SIGNS OF:

- Infections (respiratory, skin, or GI)
- Not enough fluids (dehydration)
- Medication interactions/side effects
- Not enough oxygen in the body (hypoxia)
- Low blood sugar (hypoglycemia)
- Unable to pee (urinary retention)
- Constipation

2 Watch and care:














- Look for changes in alertness or awareness
- Check vital signs more often (temperature, blood pressure, heart rate, and breathing)
- Encourage more fluids as often as resident can handle:
 - Drinking 1 litre (1L) of fluids over 24 hours (about 50-100 mL per hour when awake)

If any of these symptoms get worse, tell the health care provider (for example: doctor, nurse) right away.





3 Check for bladder infection:

To rule out a bladder infection, we won't use a urine dipstick test because it's not helpful for older adults over 65. Instead, we'll check for the **minimum signs** of a bladder infection before sending the urine to a lab:

<p> No catheter Minimum signs include:</p> <p>↓</p> <p> Sudden pain/burning while urinating</p> <p>Or at least two of these:</p> <p> Fever over 37.9°C (100°F) or rises by 1.5°C (2.4°F) at least twice in 12 hours</p> <p> Having to urinate more often or right away</p> <p> Blood in urine (gross hematuria)</p> <p> Pain in the lower belly area (suprapubic pain)</p> <p> Pain in the side/back area (flank pain)</p> <p> Leaking urine you can't control (urinary incontinence)</p> <p>↓</p> <p>Don't meet minimum signs? A health care provider will do an assessment to check for other causes.</p>	<p> Catheter Minimum signs include:</p> <p>↓</p> <p> Fever over 37.9°C (100°F) or rises by 1.5°C (2.4°F) at least twice in 12 hours</p> <p> Pain in the side/back area (flank pain)</p> <p> Shaking chills</p> <p> Sudden confusion/trouble thinking clearly/can't focus (delirium)</p> <p>↓</p> <p>Don't meet minimum signs? A health care provider will do an assessment to check for other causes.</p>
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If a patient **meets minimum signs**, urine will be sent to the lab. A health care provider should be notified to decide if antibiotics are needed while waiting for the lab results.

Not signs of a bladder infection:

-  Dark/cloudy or smelly urine alone
-  Change in mental state alone

4 Plan next steps:

Symptoms better? If the symptoms get better or go away within 48 hours, it's unlikely it is an infection. The resident will be continuously checked on to make sure they feel better.

Symptoms worse? If the symptoms are staying the same or getting worse, and the patient does not meet the minimum signs for a bladder infection, a health care provider will perform an assessment.