

WHAT YOU NEED
TO KNOW

URINARY TRACT INFECTIONS IN OLDER PERSONS

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Pharmacy

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ASYMPTOMATIC BACTERIURIA IN OLDER PERSONS

Asymptomatic bacteriuria is a condition where larger than normal numbers of bacteria are present in the urine but no symptoms result.

There is a high prevalence of asymptomatic bacteriuria in older persons. In adults >70 years of age:

- In the community – up to 19%
- In long-term care – up to 50%
- In individuals with a long-term indwelling catheter – 100%

Routine screening and treatment is **NOT** recommended for asymptomatic bacteriuria (exception - people undergoing genitourinary/prosthetic procedures and those who are immunocompromised). Treatment of asymptomatic bacteriuria does not decrease the risk of symptomatic urinary tract infection (UTI), however it can increase the risk of adverse events and drug resistance.

A positive urinalysis in the absence of symptoms does **NOT** indicate infection.

Changes in the urine (smell, cloudiness) or in mental status alone (without localized symptoms) does **NOT** indicate a urinary tract infection.

What to look for....(in residents without an indwelling urinary catheter).

One of the following:

- Acute pain on urination or acute pain, swelling or tenderness of the testes, epididymis (tube at the back of the testicles) or prostate;
- Fever or chills or high white cell count (leukocytes above the normal range) and at least one of the following:
 - New or increased urinary urgency, frequency or incontinence
 - Abnormal presence of red blood cells in the urine
 - New flank pain or suprapubic pain/tenderness
- At least 2 or more of the following symptoms:
 - New or increased urinary urgency, frequency or incontinence
 - Abnormal presence of red blood cells in the urine
 - New flank pain or suprapubic pain/tenderness

Sources:

www.rxfiles.ca – Urinary Tract Infections (UTI) in Older Adults. Rowe, TA and Juthani-Mehta, M. Urinary tract infection in older adults. Aging health. 2013 October; 9(5).
www.merckmanuals.com