Urinary Tract Infection (UTI) & Asymptomatic Bacteriuria (ASB)

When to Test Urine & When to Treat Infections

**Do not send**
1. Do not test foul smelling or cloudy urine.
2. Do not test urine for infection in asymptomatic patients, unless septic, pregnant or undergoing invasive urologic surgery.
3. Do not test urine for infection in the elderly unless there is a strong clinical suspicion of a UTI.

**Wait**
1. Diagnosis of UTI should not be assigned without typical UTI symptoms.
2. Non-specific changes in elderly patients: weakness, falls, aggression and confusion - do not mean that there is a UTI.
3. Individualize care and investigate for other causes of non-specific changes: Consider investigating: pain, medications, sleep disturbances, constipation, hypoxia, hypoglycemia, other infections.

Dehydration is the most common cause of non-specific changes.
Cloudy and/or malodorous urine is NOT a UTI.
Rehydration (unless fluid restricted) will resolve symptoms in many patients.
Consider clysis, I.V. fluids and regular fluid “rounds” to increase intake in patients with swallowing or communication difficulties.

**Send**
Order urinalysis and culture if at least 2 of the following typical UTI symptoms are present in patients without urinary catheters:
- Acute dysuria
- Temperature >38°C
- New or increased frequency, urgency, or incontinence
- Flank pain / suprapubic pain
- Blood in the urine

**Key points**
1. Positive urine culture results should NOT be treated unless there are signs of a UTI (except in pregnancy or prior to urologic surgery).
2. Patients with pyuria and positive urine cultures, and NO UTI symptoms have ASB (i.e., bladder colonization), and NOT a UTI.
3. Treating ASB does not prevent UTIs and increases the risk of resistance, adverse and allergic reactions, and Clostridium difficile infection.
4. Non-specific changes (e.g. weakness, lethargy, falls, confusion, aggression) are not indicative of a UTI without typical symptoms. Use CAM STRAINED/DIMS tools to assess for other causes. Go to AHS Insite and search Delirium, Seniors-Inpatient.

April 9, 2018

“Symptom-free pee: let it be” used with permission from Association of Medical Microbiology and Infectious Disease Canada Copyright © 2018 Alberta Health Services. This material is protected by Canadian and other international copyright laws. All rights reserved. This material may not be copied, published, distributed or reproduced in any way in whole or in part without the express written permission of Alberta Health Services (please contact AHS.AntimicrobialStewardship@ahs.ca). This material is intended for general information only and is provided on an “as is”, “where is” basis. Although reasonable efforts were made to confirm the accuracy of the information, Alberta Health Services does not make any representation or warranty, express, implied or statutory, as to the accuracy, reliability, completeness, applicability or fitness for a particular purpose of such information. This material is not a substitute for the advice of a qualified health professional. Alberta Health Services expressly disclaims all liability for the use of these materials, and for any claims, actions, demands or suits arising from such use.