

## NURSING HOME STAFF: BE ANTIBIOTICS AWARE

# Avoid Treatment of Asymptomatic Bacteriuria



## SCENARIO

You receive a positive urine culture for a resident. The resident is feeling well and does not have symptoms that indicate a urinary tract infection. It's unclear why the urine culture was done.

Asymptomatic bacteriuria (ASB) is the isolation of bacteria in a urine culture from a resident without signs or symptoms of a urinary tract infection (UTI). ASB is common in nursing home residents, found in an estimated 15-35% of men, 25-50% of women, and 100% of residents with catheters.

Residents with a positive urine culture result (even with pyuria  $\geq 10$  white blood cells/cml) alone should typically not be treated with antibiotics. In older adults, pyuria does NOT indicate that ASB needs treatment.<sup>1</sup>

## Nursing home staff can avoid treatment of ASB by:



1. Avoiding a urine analysis and culture unless a resident has local signs and symptoms suggestive of a UTI.



2. Avoiding antibiotic therapy unless the resident meets the minimum criteria for antibiotic treatment.

### Minimum Criteria for Starting Antibiotics in a Suspected Urinary Tract Infection<sup>2</sup>

#### Without Catheter

#### Either one of the following:

- Acute dysuria OR  Fever\*

#### AND at least one of the following:

- New or worsening urgency  Frequency  Suprapubic pain  
 Urinary incontinence  Gross hematuria  Costovertebral angle tenderness

#### With Catheter

#### AND at least one of the following:

- Fever\*  New Costovertebral angle tenderness  
 Shaking chills  New onset delirium

\*Fever  $>37.9^{\circ}$  [ $100^{\circ}\text{F}$ ],  $1.5^{\circ}\text{C}$  [ $2.4^{\circ}\text{F}$ ] increase above baseline temperature.  
Antibiotics should not be started for cloudy, foul smelling urine.

The scenarios and recommendations are applicable to most nursing home residents. This document is meant to provide general guidance and does not apply to all clinical scenarios. Always assess the individual resident, use your clinical judgment and follow your facility's protocols and treatment guidelines when applicable.

#### References:

1. Nicolle LE, Bradley S, Colgan R et al. Infectious Diseases Society of America Guidelines for the Diagnosis and Treatment of Asymptomatic Bacteriuria in Adults. Clin Infect Dis. 2005 Mar 1;40(5):643-54.
2. Loeb MI, Bentley DW, Bradley S et al. "Development of minimum criteria for the initiation of antibiotics in residents of long-term-care facilities: results of a consensus conference." Infect Control Hosp Epidemiol. 2001 Feb;22(2):120-4.



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