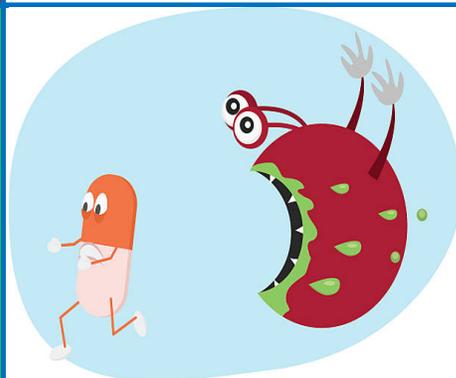


Managing Urinary Tract Infections in people over the age of 65

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Historically there has been a culture to use urine dipsticks as a tool to aid diagnosis of the presence of UTI. **Up to half of older adults, and most with a urinary catheter, will have bacteria present in the bladder/urine without an infection.** This "asymptomatic bacteriuria" is not harmful, and although it causes a positive urine dipstick, **antibiotics are not beneficial and may cause harm.**

Therefore a positive urine dipstick is NOT an appropriate tool for the diagnosis of UTI in people over the age of 65 and an assessment of signs and symptoms is a more accurate method. Current guidelines advise that:

- Dipstick testing should not be used to diagnose UTI in people over the age of 65 with possible UTI
- Dipstick testing should not be used to diagnose UTI in adults with urinary catheters.
- People over the age of 65 and those with urinary catheters should be clinically assessed prior to being diagnosed with a UTI

East Lancashire Hospital Trust (ELHT) has removed the use of urinary dipsticks for the diagnosis of UTI, except for children, as it is leading to unnecessary antimicrobial use. A UTI assessment form is available which care and nursing home staff should complete and the information relayed to the patient's surgery. The clinician should assess the information, document their recommendations on the form, feed this back to the carer and finally follow up accordingly.

Antibiotics should NOT routinely be prescribed over the phone without seeing the patient

A copy of the form and all actions must be clearly documented in the patient's medical and care records. The form can be obtained at:

[**UTI Assessment Form for Care Homes**](#)

A training video for care home professionals about the assessment tool is also available at:

[**To Dip or Not to Dip training animation**](#)

A positive urine dipstick is NOT an appropriate tool for the diagnosis of UTI in people over the age of 65

An assessment of signs and symptoms is a more accurate method

For further information, please contact the Medicines Management Team on
01254 282087 (BwD CCG) or 01282 644807 (EL CCG)