

Delirium

- ### Respiratory Risk Factors
- Use of physical restraint
 - Use of intubating catheter
 - Adding three or more medications
 - Multiple test scores
 - Pain
 - Surgery
 - Anaesthesia and hypoxia
 - Malnutrition and dehydration

What causes delirium?

- Infections
- Pyrexia
- Drug side effects such as anticholinergics and steroids
- Dehydration
- Hypox/hypoxaemia or low haemoglobin
- Liver or kidney dysfunction/failure
- Sudden withdrawal of drugs or alcohol

- Critical illness
- Major surgery
- Spillage
- Brain injury or infection
- Traumatic stress
- Constipation
- Being in an unfamiliar place
- Sleep deprivation



Common medicines that contribute to delirium

There are a number of medicines that can contribute to delirium. These include:




Medicine	Effect
Anticholinergics	Can cause confusion and memory loss
Sedatives	Can cause drowsiness and confusion
Antidepressants	Can cause changes in mood and behaviour
Antipsychotics	Can cause changes in perception and reality
Antibiotics	Can cause allergic reactions and other side effects
Chemotherapy	Can cause changes in the body and mind
Drugs for pain	Can cause drowsiness and confusion
Drugs for blood pressure	Can cause dizziness and lightheadedness
Drugs for diabetes	Can cause changes in blood sugar levels
Drugs for thyroid problems	Can cause changes in energy levels and mood
Drugs for heart problems	Can cause changes in heart rate and blood pressure
Drugs for kidney problems	Can cause changes in fluid balance and electrolyte levels
Drugs for liver problems	Can cause changes in liver function and metabolism

- ### Pre-disposing Risk Factors
- Age > 70
 - Pre-existing dementia
 - Recent medical illness
 - History of previous delirium
 - Alcohol and smoking history
 - Depression
 - Unchecked medical problems and physical needs
 - Polypharmacy (multiple medicines with overlapping actions)
 - Alcohol

Consequences of Delirium



- Increased hospital stay
- Increased hospital costs
- Increased risk of mortality
- Increased risk of infection
- Increased mortality
- Worsening of a person's mental abilities and function
- Longer mechanical ventilation



Symptoms of Delirium

A person with delirium will show some of the following changes...

- Being more confused than normal
- Changes in attention – such as being easily distracted or agitated
- Fluctuating level of consciousness or becoming easily disoriented
- Fluctuating behaviour
- Fluctuating speech
- Fluctuating changes in behaviour
- Fluctuating patterns of sleeping and waking
- Incoherence
- Exaggerated reflexes
- Fluctuating level of arousal/alertness



What is Delirium?




Delirium is a temporary, serious but often treatable condition that affects a person's ability to think clearly.

It causes a person to become easily distracted and more confused than normal.

Delirium occurs in 30-60% of intensive care patients.

For someone with delirium, symptoms come on over a matter of days/hours.

Pressure
relaxation

Delirium is a temporary, serious but often treatable condition that affects a person's ability to think clearly.

Am I hydrated?

Has a healthy person a healthy thirst response?



1 = Not thirsty at all
2 = Slightly thirsty
3 = Thirsty
4 = Very thirsty
5 = Extremely thirsty
6 = Thirsty
7 = Very thirsty
8 = Extremely thirsty
9 = Thirsty
10 = Not thirsty at all