

THE Guardian™

LTC Professionals Newsletter

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Urinary Health in LTC

Maintaining urinary health for Long Term Care residents can be difficult. Unfortunately for many, urinary tract infections (UTIs) are an all too common problem amongst the elderly population.

While often is the case that women experience more UTI issues than men, this gender gap closes as the population ages. Therefore it is important to pay close attention to all of your residents and their urinary health.

There are some factors that impact the frequency of developing infection. Elderly diabetics, according to the National Kidney and Urologic Diseases Information Clearinghouse, are at an even greater risk for infection than the general population.

Diabetes is one noted disease that alters the immune system creating an environment where increased susceptibility for developing an UTI exists. Since the diabetic population in long term care is increasing, it is important to have a heightened

awareness of their increase probability for infection.

Diabetes over time can also cause nerve damage to the bladder. When the bladder is prohibited from emptying completely, the likelihood of bacteria growth in both the kidneys and bladder increases.

People with diabetes are also at risk for developing reoccurring and persistent UTIs.

Early signs of UTI in the elderly are often missed. Symptoms may include new onset incontinence, fever, urinary frequency, flank pain, and dysuria. Be on the look-out for changes in behavior that might suggest a UTI even if there are no specific symptoms indicating an infection. Often they may be understated and many times infection of the urinary tract is asymptomatic for the elderly.

Undiagnosed and untreated UTIs can lead to increased complications and can compromise bladder and kidney health. UTIs can trigger

incontinence issues which should be monitored closely as this can lead to skin issues like rashes and and skin ulcers. Furthermore, these infections can compound other health issues and affect overall wellness.

Don't let UTIs be a stumbling block for the residents of your facility. Being aware of the potential for infection, especially in higher risk populations, allows for proper monitoring and treatment so maintaining the urinary health of your residents does not have to be a difficult battle ground after all.

For more information on urinary health as it pertains to the LTC setting, check out these story sources:

www.merck.com/mkgr/mmg/sec12/ch100/ch100a.jsp

www.merck.com/mmpe/sec17/ch231/ch231b.html

www.annalsoflongtermcare.com/content/urinary-tract-infections-long-term-care

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For questions, comments and suggestions on The Guardian™ please contact Stacie Suedkamp at 800.818.8877 ext. 3227 or suedkamps@arkrayusa.com



Optimizing Oral Health

Almost everyone recognizes the old saying “You are what you eat”, however, with more and more research about oral care and the links to overall health and wellness that saying might be surpassed by one that reads, “You’re only as healthy as your mouth.”

In recent years studies have proven significant links between serious illness and inadequate oral health care. Periodontal disease is no longer just a disease that puts residents at risk for losing teeth; it affects almost 40% of seniors in LTC settings. Gum disease has repeatedly proven to be a gateway for bacteria to wreak havoc throughout the body.

Studies demonstrating the link between Type II diabetes and gum disease have been publicized for several years. According to the American Academy of Periodontology, gum disease and diabetes is a two way street. Diabetics are more susceptible to periodontal disease and untreated gum disease makes managing blood glucose more difficult. Reversing this connection is possible as research also demonstrates that improving oral health and reducing gum disease assists in lowering blood glucose levels.

As the number of Type II diabetics continues to increase in the Long Term Care setting, it is all the more relevant to make

certain that everyone involved in resident care sees the benefits of good oral hygiene.

In addition to Type II diabetes, risk factors for heart disease and pneumonia have also been associated with poor dental hygiene and periodontal disease. Again, these risk factors can be greatly decreased as oral hygiene issues are addressed and remedied.

Ensuring residents have access to regular dental care and screening is a major step towards improving oral health. Unfortunately, in spite of the research showing the benefits of improved oral health, the elderly population in the LTC setting has unique barriers preventing regular professional dental care.

Access to regular dental check-ups is sometimes difficult due to financial concerns, transportation issues, anxiety or even the lack of recognition

that there is a need for oral care. Implementing a dental care plan that involves the resident and the care team is the first step to improving oral healthcare. In addition, providing assistance with daily brushing and flossing can also greatly improve oral healthcare.

Training staff and educating them about the far reaching benefits of oral health puts someone on the front line of defense when it comes to maintaining healthy residents.

For more information about oral hygiene in long term care, check out these story sources:

<http://www.perio.org/consumer/mbc.diabetes.htm>

http://ahca.myflorida.com/mchq/Long_Term_Care/trust_fund/pdf/TandemDental.pdf

Get a Grip on Oral Care

Engaging your residents can help overcome some of the difficulties with brushing and flossing:

- Use a wide elastic band to attach the brush to your hand.
- Enlarge the brush handle with a sponge, rubber ball or bicycle handle grip. Also try winding an elastic bandage or adhesive tape around the handle.
- Lengthen the handle with a tongue depressor or a ruler.
- Tie floss into a loop for easier handling.
- Use an electric toothbrush or commercial floss holder.

For more information on oral care, go to: <http://www.ada.org/2944.aspx?currentTab=1>



MDS 3.0 Discharge Plan

The new MDS 3.0 requires facilities to have a discharge plan in place. Did you know that ARKRAY can assist with the diabetes component of your discharge program?

ARKRAY offers a complete diabetes solution with our GLUCOCARD® blood glucose meters. You'll be able to ensure your residents accurate and precise results at an affordable price with the same confidence and quality you know and trust from having used our ASSURE® family of products.

Recommending GLUCOCARD® for

your discharge program means every resident leaving your care will be supported by our comprehensive, free YouChoose™ Wellness Program.

You Choose™ offers practical tools, encouragement, and small, simple changes to help make healthier choices day to day. We offer tips and support to help your residents achieve their diabetes management goals.

You've provided your residents with top-notch care by using professional grade blood glucose monitoring systems from ARKRAY. Give them

the peace of mind that they can continue managing diabetes by discussing which GLUCOCARD® product and options will be the best fit for blood glucose monitoring once they leave your facility.

We have a dedicated inside sales team that can help your local pharmacy obtain the necessary supplies for your residents to continue their care in their community wherever they may go.

For more information go to www.assureusa.com/mds or call 800.818.8877

Product Focus: DiaScreen



ARKRAY has long been the manufacturer of high quality dip-and-read urinalysis test strips, intended for use as an in vitro diagnostic aid using urine specimens. DiaScreen strips provide qualitative and semi-quantitative tests read by visual comparison of the reacted reagent to the color chart printed on the bottle label. All tests are read at 60 or 120 seconds for quick results.

The DiaScreen 10 tests urine specimens for the presence of leukocytes, specific gravity, urobilinogen, glucose, ketone, bilirubin, protein, nitrite, blood and pH. DiaScreen

strips are a quick and convenient screening tool for abnormal body functions. With multiple configurations available, selecting the set-up with just the right tests provide dramatic savings when compared to other reagent strips for urinalysis.

Features:

- High quality test strips
- Easy to read – test strip spacing matches color chart
- Only two read times for visual use
- Manufactured in the USA
- Large selection of test strip configurations

For more information about how you can use DiaScreen test strips in your care practice, contact your ARKRAY representative by calling 800.818.8877 or check out our website at www.arkraypoc.com/diascreen1.



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\$50 Question

Periodontal disease can increase risks for what other diseases?

Submit your answer to info@arkrayusa.com or fax to

In every issue of *The Guardian*, ARKRAY will ask a question about topics featured in the issue. A **\$50 AMEX gift certificate** will be awarded to one person who submits the correct answer. Those submitting the correct answer will be pooled in a drawing. You will only be notified if you are the winner.

Submission Details: Please mail, fax, or email your answer along with your full name, facility name, facility address and phone number to the attention of **Stacie Suedkamp** **ARKRAY USA, Inc.** **5198 W 76th St. Edina, MN 55439** **Fax: 952.646.3230** info@arkrayusa.com

Last Issue:

True or False: Hepatitis B Virus contamination only happens when lancing devices are shared?

Answer: FALSE

The answer to the question was found on pages 1 of the last issue in the article entitled "Raising Awareness of Risk"

Congratulations!
Amy Deyo RN, DON
Sacred Heart Care Center

