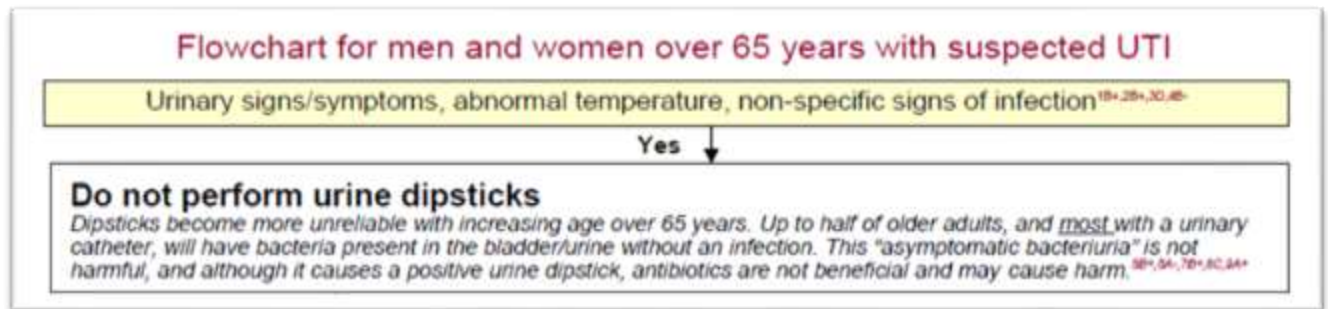


UTI & Dipstick Quick Facts

Public Health England Guidance: Diagnosis of urinary tract infections November 2018



- Bacteria in the urine can be normal - especially in older people.
- The urine has a microbiome: Natural colonisation increases with age, is harmless and in balance.
- Up to 50% female and 40% male nursing home residents will have bacteria in urine.
- With catheter in situ >30days 100% will have colonising bacteria in urine.
- Antibiotics are unnecessary, have side effects and eradicating microorganisms will select out increasingly resistant strains.

Urine dipsticks test for:

- Nitrites - a chemical produced by bacteria
- Leucocyte esterase - a chemical found in white blood cells
- Blood

Specificity is poor (Positive predictive value is less than 50%!)

These tests will be positive in asymptomatic bacteriuria but this does not mean there is an infection.

A positive dipstick in an older person is not helpful.

This can give a false diagnosis of UTI and the actual diagnosis is missed



Symptomatic

- **If symptomatic – do not need dipstick – you have an empirical clinical diagnosis**
- **SEND a sample to microbiology for culture and sensitivities**
- **Clean catch urine in a red-topped tube. Label with pt ID, clinical details and any antibiotics**
- **Unwell, clinical concern – monitor NEWS2, screen for sepsis and escalate as per policy**

Asymptomatic

- **Don't send urine cultures (or dipstick) if no urinary symptoms**
- Positive urine cultures in the absence of any clinical signs of infection do not need treating with antibiotics - unless pregnant or undergoing urological procedures

Other factors

- Smelly urine is not correlated with infection and should not be considered a symptom of UTI
- It IS a sign of concentrated urine and poor hydration status
- Clear urine is unlikely to be infection
- Cloudy urine is potentially a concern - evaluate with symptoms and clinical context
- Good personal hygiene & hand decontamination is important
- Constipation (also related to oral intake) impairs bladder emptying increasing risk of UTI