

If you have any questions, please talk with your physician or care team.

Delirium Care

Delirium is a change in a person's mental ability and function. It can cause a person to be confused and unsure of their surroundings. Most often, it is a temporary condition that can be treated. However, some people can have permanent mental changes. It is not the same as dementia.

Symptoms of delirium

A person with delirium may show these symptoms:

- Confusion
- Trouble paying attention and staying focused
- Memory problems
- Changes in their level of consciousness
- Behavior changes such as becoming violent or depressed
- Mood swings
- Restlessness
- Hallucinations

Causes of delirium

A person may be at risk for delirium for these reasons.

- Medical conditions:
 - Infection
 - Electrolyte imbalances
 - Changes in the nervous system
 - Dehydration
- Environmental conditions:
 - Disruption in their sleep/wake cycle
 - Being in new surroundings with new caretakers
 - Being less active
 - Vision or hearing problems
- Medications:
 - Side effects from medications
 - Interactions between multiple medications

Caring for a person at risk of delirium

You can help your loved one who is at risk of delirium by following these suggestions.

- Visit your loved one in the hospital, or talk with them on the phone or video chat.
- Talk to your loved one using short and simple phrases.
- Remind them often of the date, time, place and reason they are in the hospital.
- Encourage them to get out of bed during the day with help from the care team, especially around meal times.
- Help them follow good sleep habits.
 - Keep the lights on during the day and turn them off at night.
 - Open the blinds during the day.
 - Help them limit naps during the day so they can have good sleep at night.
 - Help them use ear plugs or an eye mask at night.
 - Help them relax before bedtime.
 - Reduce their screen time before bed.
- Help them use hearing and visual aids such as glasses or hearing aids.
- Bring them familiar items and pictures from home.
- Use a diary to track their activities and progress in the hospital.

If you have any questions or concerns, please ask your loved one's care team.