ST. FRANCIS 24/7 CALL CENTER: (321) 269-4240

St. Francis REFLECTIONS® Hospice
Established 1977 • Licensed 1990

Delirium and Confusion

Delirium is a sudden change in a person's mental state, causing confusion, disorientation, and agitation. It can be caused by medications, infections, metabolic imbalances, or the progression of the illness.

Signs and Symptoms to monitor for:

- Sudden confusion or disorientation
- Hallucinations or seeing things that aren't there
- Restlessness or agitation
- Changes in sleep patterns (e.g., staying awake at night, sleeping during the day)
- Slurred speech or incoherent conversation

Tips for Delirium and Confusion Management:

- **Medication Review**: Consult with the hospice team to review medications. Some medications may cause or worsen delirium. Adjusting dosages or discontinuing certain drugs might help.
- **Safety Measures**: Ensure the patient's safety by removing sharp objects and securing the environment. If the patient is at risk of wandering, keep doors and windows locked.
- **Reorientation**: Gently remind the patient of the time, date, and where they are if needed. Use clocks, calendars, and photos to help them stay oriented. Try to remain calm and if patient does not appear to be in any distress, allow them to find joy in what their experiencing (i.e. conversations with a passed on loved one, feelings of being someplace else with others).
- **Reassurance**: Stay with the patient, offering comfort and reassurance. Speak in a calm, soothing voice. Use gentle touch to help ground them when appropriate.

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Record and Report to St. Francis:

- Safety concerns
- Frequency of confusion
- Difficulty completing tasks or activities
- Changes in behaviors (i.e. aggression, hitting)
- Medications taken (if appropriate) and effectiveness
- What makes the confusion better/worse
- Any triggering factors

St. Francis Reflections is always available to assist with any questions or concerns 24/7

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