

Dehydration Checklist for Seniors

A senior's behaviour may be influenced by underlying medical conditions. It is important to take the time to consider the potential medical issues underlying challenging behaviour before immediately assuming the need for behaviour management strategies. If the symptoms described below are observed in a senior this may be an indication of an underlying medical condition. It is helpful to remember that it may take some time before some of these symptoms become apparent and a review may be helpful at various times throughout a stay.

Use this checklist for information and referral purposes only. Each organization should assess the use of this form against their own liability concerns. It is not a substitute for assessment and diagnosis by medical professionals. **If use of this checklist results in concern for the health of a senior, consult medical advice immediately.** Staff should not attempt to use this tool to conduct their own diagnosis. Staff should also report any concerns to their supervisor in accordance to their organization's policy and procedures.

Please also consider the personal assessment of comfort and safety experienced by the seniors when using this tool. Some seniors may be uncomfortable with others touching them or may be less likely to disclose answers to some of the questions provided.

Possible Symptoms	Yes	No
<p>Is there evidence or self-report of decreased skin turgor?</p> <p><i>Skin turgor</i> is tested by grasping the skin on the back of the hand or lower arm between two fingers so that it is tented up. Hold the skin for few seconds and then release.</p> <p>Normal: The skin snaps rapidly back into position</p> <p>Decreased: The skin remains elevated and returns slowly to its normal position</p>		
<p>Is there observation or self-report of inadequate food and fluids?</p>		
<p>Has the senior experienced vomiting, diarrhea and/or is using diuretic agents?</p> <p>Diuretic list: http://www.drugsinfocom.com/diuretics-medicines/</p>		
<p>Is the senior using blood pressure control drugs, antidepressants, and/or alcohol?</p> <p>Blood pressure control drug list: http://heartdisease.about.com/od/drugsforheartdisease/a/htn_drug.htm</p>		
<p>Is there evidence or self-report of self-restricting fluid intake?</p>		