



We hope you have been enjoying our Aging Gracefully Newsletter. Please let us know what you think. Have the articles been helpful & interesting? Do you have topics you are interested in that we have not covered or you would like covered in more depth? Please respond to the e-mail (seniorcommittee@lucasdd.org) with any suggestions or feedback.

Coming Soon: Our September Edition will include an article on 'Preparing for Holidays'

Managing Transitions

Webster defines, "transition" as "a passage from one state, stage, subject, or place to another". Just another way of saying, "change". In this issue, we will explore the variety of changes experienced by individuals with intellectual

disability who are aging and experiencing some memory loss, and how to support them. Categories of home, work or day program, and leisure will be addressed.

Change

Support

HOME

--housemates/staff

Reassure individual is still safe and needs will be met

--changing bedrooms

Allow time to adjust

--household tasks

Give more assistance

WORK/DAY PROGRAM

--different job/activity

Allow time to adjust

--different co-peers

Reassure individual

--different location

Make sure environment is suitable

(Check lighting, noise level, and distractions)

LEISURE

--not participating

Use more than words to describe activity

--not seeming interested asking

Offer the opportunity to participate rather than

Before a Change:

A daily routine can be a comforting aspect of life providing a familiarity that can be reassuring. When that familiarity is disrupted, life can become more challenging. When folks with intellectual disability have their routines disrupted they may react with words or actions that are communicating extreme displeasure. That change may also give rise to feelings of anxiety or anger. One of the best ways to prevent this from occurring is to plan what to do BEFORE that change takes place. Give that person information that a change

is about to take place. Give a brief explanation, but words are very abstract and may add to confusion rather than providing clarity. If the individual is experiencing memory loss, they may not be able to remember your explanation. You may need to repeatedly give that explanation. Do not ask the person if they remember you telling them – they will not. This type of confrontation may lead to additional anxiety. Reassure them that their needs will continue to be met. (They will still have their place to live, that they still have their job or day program, and that their family and friends still care about them.) Sometimes an individual with cognitive change may interpret the change as being the result of their action. They may blame themselves for that change. Reassure them that changes happen, and no one may be to blame. We can accept that change and find a way to live with it.

During a Change:

DURING the change, watch for increasing signs of stress. The individual may become irritable, angry or show other signs of displeasure. The dynamics of a situation change, whether it is in a living arrangement, a work setting, a leisure choice or some other aspect of a day. The loss or addition of a staff member, the change of a housemate, the adjusted responsibility in a work environment all contribute to a change. Continually reassure that person experiencing change that the people who care about them are still able to care for them. Use a calm voice. Touch can be comforting to some. Adjust the environment, or move the individual to a less stimulating location. Provide familiar stress-relievers. They may enjoy music, being outdoors, or playing a familiar game. A quiet location may provide the best relief. The sooner the familiar stress-reliever is offered, the sooner the agitation may be decreased. Offering stress-relievers is a responsibility of everyone involved in the life of someone with an intellectual disability. That team of folks includes the people in the home situation, the work setting, the folks who provide transportation, and those who provide leisure opportunities. Ignoring stress

does not mean it does not exist.

After a Change:

AFTER the change has taken place, continue to reassure the individual that their needs will continue to be met, that they are safe, and that people still care. There is life after change. That is what life is, a series of changes. Be sensitive to the fact that everyone reacts to change in their own individual way. It is a shared responsibility to acknowledge the challenge of change, and a shared responsibility to support an individual as they face that change and live through it. Remember, the only thing in life that is constant is change!

Urinary Tract Infection

The urinary tract includes the kidneys, the ureters (tubes going from each kidney to the bladder), the urinary bladder, and the urethra (tube that drains urine from the bladder to outside the body). This system, or tract, clears waste from the body.

Some Facts about UTIs

- Caused by bacteria, and this is often E.coli bacteria in human intestines
- More frequent in women than men
- Treated with antibiotics
- Uti's can cause confusion and disorientation

Risk Factors / Causes

- Catheter
- Problems with pelvic muscles and nerves, including cerebral palsy, spinal cord injury, or other neuro-muscular conditions
- Diabetes, HIV/AIDS, cancer
- Obesity

- Menopause
- Poor hygiene, such as not properly wiping after bathroom use

Symptoms to Watch For

- Urine is dark or cloudy
- Urine smells
- Dull pain in back or sides (above the hip)
- Burning and pain with urination
- Frequency
- Bloody or pink-tinged urine
- Pain in lower area of belly
- Bathroom accidents
- Nausea/vomiting
- Confusion, disorientation, drowsiness, fatigue

Prevention

- Good personal hygiene
 - Hand-washing before and after bathroom use
 - Cleansing private areas front to back during baths and showers
 - Wiping front to back after bathroom use (especially important for females)
- Proper sanitary catheter care
- Proper hydration
 - Hydration prevents urine from concentrating, which grows bacteria
 - Consult doctor re right amount and type of liquids

Treatment

- Make doctor's appointment or go to urgent care

- Immediately begin taking antibiotics that are prescribed and finish all doses even when feeling better
- Follow and complete all instructions from provider
- When treatment is received in the emergency room or urgent care, make sure to set up a follow-up appointment with a primary provider, as directed.

EMERGENCY

CONTACT DOCTOR OR SEEK URGENT CARE IMMEDIATELY if any of the following are present:

- Fever
- Pain
- Chills
- Blood in urine
- Unable to eat or drink

Call 9-1-1- for

- Difficulty breathing
- Severe pain
- Loss of consciousness
- Changes in level of consciousness (new confusion)

Start CPR immediately AFTER calling 9-1-1 if individual is not breathing and/or a pulse cannot be found.

August Activity Tip

Celebrate the Sounds Summer

This Activity will promote socialization through reminisces of summers' past.

A) Start by making homemade lemonade

Ingredients

12 Lemons, thinly sliced

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Contributions to this Newsletter comes from:
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