



Potential Causes of Pain in Non-Verbal Older Adults

Searching for potential causes of pain or discomfort is an important approach to identifying pain!

Becoming familiar with common diagnoses, conditions and procedures known to be painful can increase awareness of the possibility of pain in those who cannot tell us.



How Can You Help?

Screen for pain using a validated tool, i.e. Abbey, PAINAD

Review the medical history

Do a physical assessment

Observe behaviours, and be familiar with typical and atypical behaviour presentations

Trial an analgesic to confirm

Use the PRN order to see if there is a reduction in behaviours.

Be a client advocate

Source: Pasero, C & McCaffery, M (2011) pg. 124 Pain Assessment and Pharmacologic Management

Potential Causes

- History of Persistent Pain
- Osteoarthritis/Rheumatoid Arthritis
- Low Back Pain
- Osteoporosis and Fractures
- Degenerative Disc Disease
- Peripheral Neuropathies
- Trigeminal Neuralgia
- Diabetic Neuropathy
- Peripheral Vascular Disease
- Myofascial Pain
- Fibromyalgia
- Gout
- Bone Pain
- Cancer
- Recent Fall
- Urinary Tract Infection
- Pneumonia
- Skin Tear
- Constipation