



# SIGNS AND SYMPTOMS INDICATING A CHANGE IN STATUS

## FACT SHEET

*Change in normal eating, drinking, sleeping, urination, defecation (bowel movements) or behavior can indicate serious health issues and must be reported immediately per the agency's protocols. List is not intended to be all inclusive. Individuals may exhibit other signs and symptoms not listed here. This handout includes general medical information and is not intended to replace the medical advice of your physician or health care provider. Any questions about a person's medical condition should be directed to their physician or health care provider.*

### Eating

- Sudden change in appetite—eating more or less
- Refusal of certain or favorite foods
- Weight change
- Behavior change
- Changes in food preferences
- Trouble eating by self
- Change in ability to chew food
- Change in pace of eating
- Has had recent dental work or conditions affecting eating ability or food texture
- Choking or gagging during eating
- Coughs while eating
- Drools while eating
- Indicates pain in chest while eating
- Indicates heartburn during or following eating
- Vomits during or after eating
- Experiences unusual burping during or after eating

### Drinking

- Sudden change in amount of fluid intake—more or less
- Confusion
- Fever
- Dry mouth, lips
- Less frequent, concentrated, strong odor urine
- Difficulty swallowing
- Choking or gagging
- Coughs while or following drinking
- Drools while drinking
- Indicates pain in chest while drinking
- Indicates heartburn during or following drinking
- Vomits during or after drinking
- Experiences unusual burping during or after drinking



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### Sleep

- Can't fall asleep
- Can't stay asleep
- Trouble awakening
- Sleeps more or less than what is normal for the person
- Gets up at different time
- Snores loudly
- Sleeps off and on during normal waking hours
- Long periods between breaths during sleep

### Daily Routine

- Refusal to participate in activities that typically enjoys
- Changes in grooming habits
- Change in toileting habits
- Loss or change in ability of activities of daily living
- Weight gain
- Stiff and achy
- Change in routines such as sleeping or eating
- Change in mental clarity/confusion

### Behavior

- Self-injurious behavior
- New aggressive behavior
- More or less active than what is normal for the person

### General Manner or Mood

- Decrease in talking
- Less friendly
- Suddenly becomes quiet and sullen
- Withdraws to self
- Overly talkative or friendly

### Communication

- Speech garbled or unclear
- Stops talking or talks less



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### Appearance

- Change in color or appearance such as blue, gray, red, yellow, or pale skin color; clammy feel of skin (cool, moist)
- Change in weight up or down
- Loss of interest
- Less attention to personal appearance
- Less care for clothing
- Skin irritation
- Skin build-up

### Indication of Pain

- Moaning
- Crying
- Change in facial expression
- Change in behavior
- Red face
- Blotchy skin
- Sweaty skin
- Breathing hard
- Holding breath
- Fast heart rate
- Suddenly weakened
- Not using body part
- Moving slower
- Stretching body
- Seeking comfort
- Decreased eating
- Change in weight especially a decrease
- Self-injurious behavior



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### Physical health

#### Skin

- Redness that does not return to natural color within minutes
- Cut or other open area
- Swelling
- Rash
- Dry skin or lips
- Blotchy skin color
- Warmth to an area
- Bruising

#### Nose/sinus

- Runny discharge (clear, cloudy, or colored)
- Rubbing nose
- Indication of headache
- Frequent nosebleeds

#### Mouth and Throat

- Refusing to eat
- Redness
- White patches at back of throat
- Hoarse voice
- Fever
- Skin rash

#### Mouth and Throat *continued*

- Toothache
- Facial or gum swelling
- Gum bleeding
- Person complains of pain when swallowing
- Change in weight especially a decrease
- Sores in mouth or tongue
- Changes in breath - foul or fruity smell
- Swelling of cheeks or under chin
- Loose or broken teeth

#### Eyes

- Redness
- Yellow or green drainage
- Swelling of eyelid
- Excessive tearing
- Person complains of burning, itching, or pain
- Moving closer to objects to see, squinting
- Trouble navigating through environment
- Rubbing eyes



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### Ears

- Pulling at ear
- Ringing in ears
- Redness
- Fever
- Diminished hearing
- Drainage from ear canal
- Person complains of dizziness or pain
- Speaking louder
- Change in responsiveness to verbal interaction
- Self-injurious behavior to head or ears

### Muscles and Bones

- Loss of ability to move a leg or arm
- Stiffness
- Limited range of motion
- Individual reports pain in arms, legs, back
- Unsteady gait
- Red or swollen joints
- Limping or other change in gait
- Bruising or other discoloration

### Difficulty Swallowing

- Coughing, choking or gagging
- Wet gargly voice or wheezing
- Refusing intake of food/fluid
- Fatigue when eating
- Facial grimacing when eating, drinking
- Watery eyes when eating, drinking
- Fever
- Drooling
- Indication of heartburn or chest pain
- Vomiting
- Unusual burping
- Loss of weight

### Abdomen

- Constant or frequent abdominal pain
- Bloating
- Vomiting
- Fever



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### Breathing/Lungs

- Chest pain or tightness
- Cough
- Phlegm (mucous)
- Shortness of breath
- Wheezing
- Fever
- Chills
- Nasal congestion
- Person complains of pain in nose or teeth
- Change in normal respiratory rate
- Drowsiness
- Bluish colored nail beds or lips

### Heart and Blood Vessels

- Numb or cold hands or feet
- Swelling of ankles
- Chest pain or tightness
- Shortness of breath
- Change in normal heart rate or blood pressure
- Bluish colored nail beds or lips
- Increase in weight
- Increase in abdominal girth (measurement)

### Bowel

- Bloating
- Vomiting
- Loose stools
- Diarrhea
- Constipation
- Blood in vomit or stools
- Fever
- Different colored stools
- Excessive staining
- Hard stools
- Very large stools
- Weight loss
- Spending more time in bathroom



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### Bladder/Urinary Tract

- Difficult, painful and/or burning with urination
- Changes in urine color (clear to cloudy; light to dark yellow)
- Decrease volume of urine
- Increase volume of urine
- Infrequent urination
- Increase in frequency of urination
- Fruity or foul odor in urine
- Nausea
- Pain on one or both sides of the mid-back
- Chills
- Fever
- Drowsiness/sleeping more than normal
- Confusion
- Swelling
- Weight gain

### Neurological

- Change in frequency, intensity, or duration of seizures
- Occurrence of first seizure
- Occurrence of seizure following period of time of no seizures
- Loss of ability to move a leg or arm
- Individual reports pain in arms, legs, back
- Unsteady gait
- Drooping of side of face
- Tingling in feet or hands
- Unusually cold feet or hands
- Slurred speech or change in ability to verbalize
- Indication of head ache
- Change in behavior



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### Women's Health

- Vaginal discharge
- Itching
- Unusual odor
- Burning
- Changes in menses (frequency, length, flow)
- Lump or thickening of breast tissue
- Groin rash

### Men's Health

- Discharge from penis
- Pain
- Itching
- Redness
- Burning
- Groin rash
- Difficulty starting and maintaining stream





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