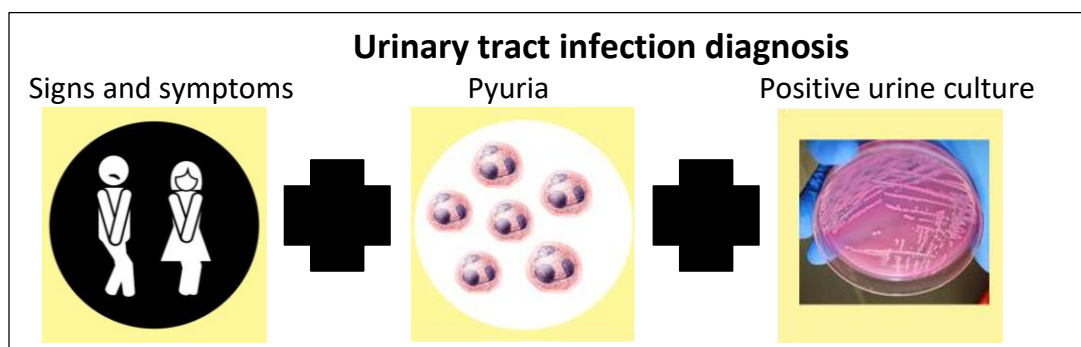




Improving Urine Culturing Practices

Key Points:

- Asymptomatic bacteriuria is defined as the presence of significant growth of bacteria in urine **without** signs and symptoms of urinary tract infection regardless of pyuria (white cells in the urine)
- Asymptomatic bacteriuria does not require antibiotic treatment except in:
 - Pregnant women
 - Patients undergoing urologic procedures in which mucosal bleeding is expected (*NOT* urinary catheter insertion or removal)
- It is common to find bacteria or white cells in the urine of patients without a urinary tract infection, particularly in residents of long-term care facilities, patients with chronic indwelling urinary catheters, patients on dialysis, and elderly patients
 - Pyuria should not prompt a urine culture if patient is asymptomatic
- Signs/symptoms of a urinary tract infection are urinary urgency, urinary frequency, pain with urination (dysuria), suprapubic pain, flank pain, fever, chills, or rigors (the latter typically seen with pyelonephritis)
 - Isolated cloudy, dark or foul-smelling urine are not signs of a UTI and should not prompt urine cultures in the absence of signs and symptoms of a UTI



How Can Nurses Reduce Unnecessary Antibiotics Driven By Urine Cultures?

- Ensure that patients have an appropriate indication before obtaining a urine culture (see [algorithm](#))

References

- Nicolle L. E. et al. Clinical Practice Guideline for the Management of Asymptomatic Bacteriuria: 2019 Update by the Infectious Diseases Society of America, Clinical Infectious Diseases, Volume 68, Issue 10, 15 May 2019, Pages e83–e110.