

ACOC Reference Tool

When to Report Changes in Vital Signs and Laboratory Values

What to Report	When to Report Vital Signs and Laboratory Values	
<i>Acute sign</i>	<i>Report Immediately</i>	<i>Report on Next Office Day</i>
Vital signs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Systolic BP >210 mmHg, <90 mmHg • Diastolic BP >115 mmHg • Resting pulse >130 bpm, <55 bpm, or >110 bpm and patient has dyspnea or palpitations • Respirations >28, <10/minute • Oral (electronic thermometer) temperatures >101°F 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Diastolic BP routinely >90 mmHg • Resting pulse > 120 bpm on repeat • exam
Weight loss		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New onset of anorexia with or without weight loss • 5% or more within 30 days • 10% or more within 6 months
Complete blood count	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •WBC 4.0 – 11.0 x 10⁹/L •Hemoglobin: Men 140 -- 180g/L Women 110 -- 140g/L •Hematocrit: Men .390 -- .540 Women .340 -- .490 •Platelets 150 – 400⁹/L 	
Chemistry	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Blood urea nitrogen (BUN) 2.5 – 6.4 mg/dl •Creatinine 53 – 115 mmol/L •Calcium 4.5 – 5.5 mEq/L •Potassium 3.5 – 5.0 mEq/L •Sodium 135 – 146 mmol/L •Blood Glucose (Random) 4.0 – 8.0 mmol/L (Fasting) 4.0 – 6.0 mmol/L •HbA1C (Optimal) < 0.07 (Sub-Optimal) 0.07 – 0.84 •Albumin 35 – 50 g/L •Bilirubin (Total) 2 – 20 umol/L •Cholesterol < 5.2 mmol/L •Triglycerides < 1.7 mmol/L 	
Drug levels	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Levels <i>above</i> therapeutic range of <i>any</i> drug (hold next dose) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Any therapeutic or low level, unless resident shows evidence of possible adverse drug reaction despite therapeutic or low result
Prothrombin Time (PT) International Normalized ratio (INR)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •INR > 6 IUs (hold warfarin) •PT (in seconds) 3x control (hold warfarin) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • INR 3-6 IUs (hold warfarin) • PT (in seconds) 2x control (hold warfarin)
Urinalysis	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Abnormal result in patient with signs and symptoms possibly related to urinary tract infection or urospsis (e.g., fever, burning sensation, pain, altered mental status) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Abnormal result in patient with no signs or symptoms
Urine culture	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •> 100,000 colony count with symptoms 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Any colony count, no symptoms
X-ray	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New or unsuspected finding (e.g., fracture, pneumonia, CHF) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Old or long-standing finding, no change

Permission Granted: Advanced Practice Nurses – Sunnybrook Hospital Toronto – Aging and Veterans Care
Contact: Emily.McLeod@sunnybrook.ca or Sue.Sebastian@sunnybrook.ca and adapted with permission from American Medical Directors Association. (2003). *Acute change of condition in long-term care setting. Clinical practice guideline.* Columbia, MD: Author. www.amda.com