

Be an Anemia Detective

Nonspecific “Clues” That May Suggest the Presence of Anemia

Instructions:

One or more of the following clues may be indicative of the presence of anemia. However, anemia may be present in the absence of symptoms. For patients with moderate to severe communication problems (e.g., language barriers, aphasia, cognitive impairment), it is important to observe and document the following nonspecific clues and, if present, seek further assessment for possible anemia.

- _____ Complaints of being tired
- _____ Complaints of dizziness
- _____ Increase in falls
- _____ Decreased ability to participate in exercises
- _____ Decline in function from previous level
- _____ Decreased activity level from before
- _____ Labored breathing, especially with exertion
- _____ Increased confusion
- _____ Pale or cool skin

Possible Anemia “Clues” in the MDS 2.0

In addition to section I on the MDS, a combination of MDS “clues” might indicate that the patient may have anemia. To assess for hidden clues, look at the patient’s MDS to complete the following checklist. One or more checks could indicate the presence of anemia and should prompt further investigation. (Note that no one item, or combination of items, conclusively indicates the presence of anemia.)

- _____ Change in cognitive status (B6)
- _____ Change in ADL function (G9)
- _____ Falls (J4)
- _____ Skin pallor (M1) (M4)

If anemia is diagnosed, use code oo on section I on the MDS 2.0 form.



Dedicated To Long Term Care Medicine

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