

What does delirium look like?

Observe, recognise, and take action.



**Confusion, agitation, lethargy, or even aggression in patients?
These symptoms may indicate delirium!**

What is delirium?

Delirium is a disease that can occur before, during or after hospitalisation.

Delirium can manifest as confusion, lethargy, agitation, or even aggressive behaviours.

Older patients are particularly at risk.

This can result in severe or long-term after-effects:

- A prolonged hospital stay
- An increased risk of dementia
- A shortened life expectancy

Measures taken to help patients orientate themselves, and ensuring personal contact can prevent delirium.

The earlier delirium is detected, the easier it is to treat.



**Turn this page over to
find out more about how
we can work together to
combat delirium!**

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As a **relative or visitor**, you can calm an agitated patient by eliminating any sources of fear, and conveying a sense of safety. Listen, and help to orientate the person by talking to them.



As **employees** (e.g. medical professionals, patient transport, food and catering, cleaning staff), you will see the same patients on repeated occasions, and will be able to pick up on the first signs of delirium as a result.



If you share a room with another **patient**, you will be spending a lot of time together. This also means you will be one of the first people to notice any changes in behaviour.



- Look out for signs of agitation, confusion, lethargy, or aggressive behaviour.
- Do not take it personally if someone is insulting, starts talking in a strange manner, or if they are dismissive.
- Avoid discussions where the patient is not understanding reality, or is perceiving it differently.
- Create an environment which helps to orientate them using personal objects, such as hearing and visual aids, as well as photos of familiar people.

Inform the medical team or nursing staff if you notice any changes in behaviour or you notice anything out of the ordinary.

For more information about delirium, visit

[https://www.initiative-qualitaetsmedizin.de/projekte-kampagnen.](https://www.initiative-qualitaetsmedizin.de/projekte-kampagnen)

