


DELIRIUM: TOP TIPS

1. LOOK CAREFULLY FOR DELIRIUM



PINCHME
Pain
INfection
Constipation 
Hydration
Medication
Environment

Then use the 4AT to help diagnose delirium

www.the4at.com

 **SLEEP DEPRIVATION**

makes delirium worse:
Encourage good sleep hygiene

 **GLASSES? Put them on!**

 **ASK ABOUT ALCOHOL**

 **HEARING AIDS? Put them in (& check batteries!)**

2. HARNESS THE POWER OF THE FAMILY



LISTEN to family/friends/carers who tell you the patient is confused

ALLOW open visiting & family photos at bedside.
MINIMISE ward transfers (and document all this!)

3. FIND/STOP CULPRIT MEDS



- Amitriptyline
- Combo analgesics
- Anticholinergics
- Benzodiazepines

... can all cause or worsen delirium. Can you deprescribe anything?
NB caution stopping benzos suddenly

4. ORIENTATE YOUR PATIENT



Clocks & calendars

IF YOU REALLY HAVE NO OPTION BUT TO PRESCRIBE MEDICATION TO RELIEVE SEVERE AGITATION OR DISTRESS then use haloperidol or olanzapine at lowest possible dose, and consider benzodiazepines if antipsychotics are CI.