Elderly and End of Life Care

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Elderly Populations

Percent - Age 65 Years and Over

1.8% - 9%
9% - 12.4%
12.4% - 20%
20% - 34.7%

United States = 12.4%

Source: United States Census Bureau, Census of Population and Housing, 2000
Note: Alaska and Hawaii are not to scale.
Case 1

Mr. N is a 90 yo male with multiple medical problems brought to our clinic in a wheelchair accompanied by his daughter. His chief complaint is excruciating lower back pain due to which he can no longer go out to dinner with his family and sit through a meal. His pain is 10/10 when sitting. Subsequently he has lost about 30 pounds of weight in a year.
Case 1

Before the onset of pain, he had been very functional a year ago and was able to work as much as 20-30 hours a week running his own business selling small appliances. This was continued even after he was placed on hemodialysis three times a week. He has had kyphoplasty in September, 2004 to relieve his pain from compression fracture, but has not gotten much relief from the procedure.
Case 1

- Permanent pace maker 1994 due to sick sinus syndrome
- Ischemic cardiomyopathy
- CAD s/p PTCA and stent in 1997
- End stage renal disease on hemodialysis for 2 years
- Nephrolithiasis s/p ureteral stents and lithotripsy
- 10 X 10 cm posterior neck lipoma
- Facial basal cell carcinoma s/p resection
Case 1

- Allergy- hx of statin-induced hepatitis
- Med-Oxycontin+vicodin which lessened 10/10 pain to 8/10 pain previously. only on tylenol and motrin prn Protonix
- Social Hx
  He lives with his wife and a care-giver. His wife recently has had pelvic fracture and been ambulating with a walker. He used to drink 2-3 times a day and smoked cigars but stopped a year ago. No major accidents.
Case 1

- ROS-wt loss as above
- Physical exam
  Frail 90-yo male appear fatigued but not in acute distress.
  moderate kyphosis
  10 X10 cm lipoma over right sided neck posterior to his right ear.
  Tenderness around cervical and lumbar (L2-5) regions bilaterally
  Tongue exam: dusky and many cracks.
Case 1

- We taught the patient as well as his caregiver to perform simple massage and acupressure techniques. The patient was skeptical but heeded our advice. We also administered brief sessions of acupuncture guided by TCM theory as well as myofascial trigger point concepts and performed lidocaine trigger point injections during his weekly visits. Over the next four visits, he reported decrease in his pain without use of medications and improved ability to sit for extended periods, allowing him to eat out with his family several times. He was also able to go on a cruise with other hemodialysis-dependent patients.
Hi Sue! My beloved Dad passed away at UCLA on 2/10/06. He was having severe SOB and got admitted on 2/06/06. He actually seemed to be "improving" somewhat when his heart simply stopped during the night. In the three weeks before he died he went to two dinner parties; visited his friend at Arborview; took me and step-mom to see the Billy Crystal show (all three hours!); went out for lobster with friends; went into his business for several hours; and had the neighbors over for his annual Super Bowl Party. He could barely breathe; he could barely walk; but he continued to suck every ounce of living out of his life. I will miss him dearly but I feel so greatful that he lived to be 91 and lived so fully. I want to thank you again for helping relieve his back pain last year so we could take the Mexican Cruise. And now we are planning for the Alaska Cruise in July. Dad wanted us to carry on with the Cruise "with or without" him. Hoping our paths will cross again soon. yours,
Hypercholesterolemia

• Positive association with CHD mortality in men aged 65 and above
• No longer significant for men aged 80 and above
• No significant association in women aged 65 and above
Hypercholesterolemia

• Good measure of nutrition for elderly
Mortality and obesity

• BMI –inverse relationship with all-cause mortality?

• In those with poor health status, obesity (BMI>25) is associated with better outcome

- Archives of Internal medicine Vol 166 Nov 14 Jul 2006
Palliative Care

"Of course you don't feel any better. Two years ago I gave you six months to live. You do the math."
Search

- ACE inhibitor and CHF-5,274
- Depression and terminal illness-179
- Spirituality and terminal illness-45
Search


- 1% the Lancet, and NEJM and J of AMA.
Case 2

Dr. R is a 90-year-old gentleman who presented to ER with new jaundice, fatigue and wt loss of 10 LBs on June 5th, 2006. Evals revealed 3x2 cm mass in the head of the pancreas. The stent was placed the next day and surgery was scheduled in 2 weeks. He presented to our clinic wishing to be treated for pre-op wellness. His PMH is noted with well managed HTN, hypercholesterolemia, and prostate cancer. His fatigue and appetite improved with our treatments. However, his mass continued to grow rapidly next 2 weeks and surgeons opted supportive care without surgery.
Case 2

After 3 months of treatments, Mr. R’s energy level and appetite improved to his baseline and went to Eastern Europe with his daughter for his “final trip” for 2 weeks. His trip was uneventful and now planning for one more trip to see his other daughter in SC.
Diversity

• Ethnic minorities-1/3 of US population
• Distrust of the US health care system
• Cultural variation about “bad news”
• Variation about advance directives
• Variation about end-of-life care

-Searight, American Family Physician, vol. 71/No. 3(Feb 2005)
Diversity

• Cruel to inform directly
• Navajo Belief: negative word and thoughts about health become self-fulfilling
• Hispanic, Chinese, and Pakistani communities: family members actively protect terminally ill pts from knowledge of their conditions
• African and Japanese Physicians choose terms such as “growth” “mass” “uncertain tissue” “blood disease” rather than cancer.

Advance Directives

- 20%
- Lower rates among Asians, Hispanics, and blacks
- 40% of elderly white pts have AD vs 16% of elderly back pts have AD

-Searight, American Family Physician, vol. 71/No. 3 (Feb 2005)
Doctor and Spirituality

• 69% wishes to discuss spiritual concerns if seriously ill, but 3% choose to speak to a physician

Spiritual Belief and Bereavement

- People with no spiritual belief took longer time to resolve their grief after the death.

-Walsh, BMJ 2002;324:1551
Helpful and Harmful Faith

• A review of the medical records of 172 children who died after their parents relied on faith healing instead of standard medicine. Researchers found that most of the children would have survived if they had received medical care.

-Asser, Pediatrics. 1998;101:625-629
Helpful and Harmful Faith

• 85% of respondents (members of an American Cancer Society support group for women with breast cancer) note that religion helped them to cope with their illness.

• Similar findings in recent Sloan-Kettering Study

- Asser, Pediatrics. 1998;101:625-629
My Interest

• Need of appropriate guidelines for spiritual care based in an evidence-based model?
• Need of better guidelines for palliative care and pain control for elderly?