



Medicine

Category: Clinical

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Reasons for elderly patient hospitalization: The impact of diabetes and other comorbidities

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Introduction:

Studies have shown that hospitalizations in elderly patients aged 65 and above are preventable. This study aimed to determine the main reasons for elderly patient hospitalization in Kuwait, and to analyze the impact of diabetes and other comorbidities on these hospitalizations.

Methods:

Data related to patients admitted to the Department of Internal Medicine in Al-Sabah hospital, from 1st January to 29th February 2008, were abstracted manually from the medical records.

Results:

Of all hospital eligible admissions during the study period (n=552), elderly patients accounted for 31.0% of patients. Among elderly patients, 52.6% were male and 80.1% were Kuwaiti. The most frequent reasons for hospitalization were cardiovascular diseases (47.4%) and respiratory tract diseases (29.2%). The most frequent specific diagnoses for hospitalization were pneumonia (19.9%), acute coronary syndrome (ACS) (18.7%), stroke (14.0%), heart failure (10.5%), and chronic obstructive airway disease (5.8%). Among elderly patients, prevalence of history of hypertension, diabetes, and dyslipidemia was 80.1%, 63.7%, and 53.2%, respectively, which is twice as high as patients aged <65 years. However, prevalence of smoking was lower in elderly patients compared to patients aged <65 years (23.2% vs. 36.7%; $p<0.005$). Hospital stay was longer in elderly patients compared to patients aged <65 years (10.6 days vs. 7.7 days, respectively; $p<0.005$).

Conclusions:

Elderly patients accounted for approximately one-third of admissions in the Department of Internal Medicine in Kuwait, with longer stay during hospitalization. The most frequent diagnoses of elderly patients were pneumonia and ACS. These findings support efforts to improve care for elderly patients, especially those with hypertension, diabetes, and dyslipidemia, and they highlight the need for primary and secondary preventive and therapeutic outpatient care strategies, particularly influenza and pneumococcal vaccinations.

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