

Los Angeles Trade-Technical College

Health Occupations Course 49

Healthy Aging: Principles and Clinical Practice for Clinicians



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Comprehensive Geriatric Assessment

Factors to consider with assessment of geriatric client:

- Breathing patterns
- Pursed lips
- Skin blushing
- Cyanosis
- Pallor
- Inspection of gait with or without assistive device
- Dress
- Communication patterns
- Diminished senses
- Tone of voice
- Weak handshake



Comprehensive Geriatric Assessment Cont'd

Factors to consider with assessment of geriatric client:

- Polypharmacy with medications
- Support system
- Education
- Follow up care
- Positive or negative outlook
- Patterns of coping
- Appearance and grooming
- Depression, Anger, Hostility
- Capable to make their own decisions
- Sense of loss of control?



History History

- Medical History
- Surgical history
- Family history
- Allergies
- Vaccination history
- Social history
- Safe sex practices
- Review of systems
- Remember to establish rapport!
- Pay attention to verbal and nonverbal clues



The Physical Exam

- Height, weight, and vital signs
- Geriatric Clinicians must pay special attention to client's gait, personal appearance, hygiene, eye contact etc.
- Evaluate for normal aging processes as well as abnormal findings not attributed to aging process
- Please refer to TABLE 3.2



Screening and Preventative Care Recommendations for the Geriatric Patient

- Considerations for Screening an Elderly Client:
 1. Patient's life expectancy
 2. Comorbid conditions
 3. Functional status

Goal of preventative care screening exams is to prevent disease as well as promote successful healthy aging.

- *Sensory Impairment*
- *Cancer Screenings*



Cognitive Screening

- Increasing aging population leads to increase in the incidence of Alzheimer's Disease and Dementia
- Mini-Cog Exam screens for Dementia
- CAM (Confusion Assessment Method) screens for Delirium



Nutritional Screening

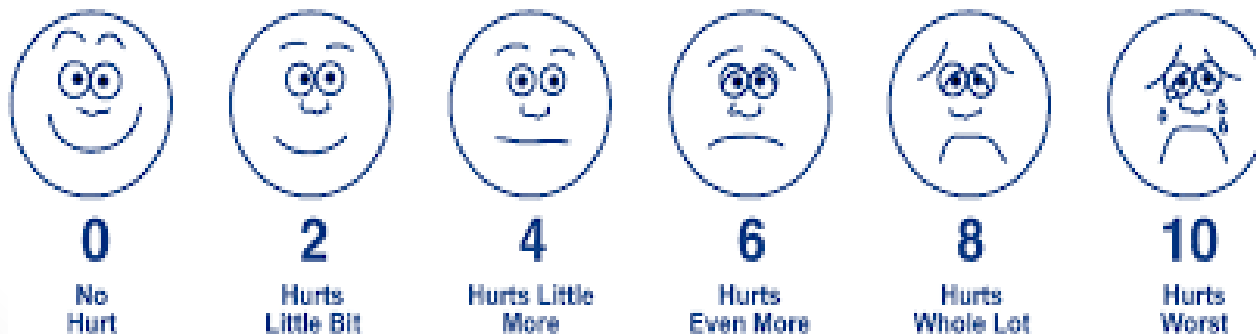
- Recommended nutritional counseling for all adults especially those who suffer from diabetes, HTN, and CAD.
- Height, weight and BMI (Body Mass Index) calculated
- Physiologic changes
- Oral problems



Pain Assessment

- 5th vital sign is Pain
- Complete pain assessment is necessary for geriatric patients including onset of pain, duration, frequency, intensity, relieving and contributing factors etc.
- 3 Pain Assessment Scales
 1. Number Rating Scale
 2. Verbal Descriptor Scale
 3. Faces Pain Scale

Wong-Baker FACES™ Pain Rating Scale



Sleep Assessment

- First indication of poor sleep in geriatric patient is interference with daytime functioning.
- May be caused by undertreated pain, certain medications, daytime napping, decreased activity.
- Three sleep disorders
 1. Restless leg syndrome
 2. Sleep-disordered breathing
 3. REM sleep behavior disorder



Functional Assessment

- 2.4 million nonfatal falls reported in US Emergency Departments making falls leading cause of injury to geriatric population
- Timed Get Up and Go Test
- Functional Gait Test
- Berg Balance Scale
- Katz Index of Independence in Activities of Daily Living
- ADL's vs. IADL's



Mental Health Assessment Screening Tools

- Geriatric population living with chronic illness is at an increased risk for depression
- 75% of older adults visited their primary care physician within one month of committing suicide
- CAGE Test
- Elder abuse can be physical, psychological, neglect, sexual, or financial abuse.



Summary

- The unique health care needs of the older patient require critical thinking, excellent communication skills that involve all members of the multidisciplinary healthcare team, the patient, the family of the patient, and caretakers in order to increase patients functional status and quality of life.

