Geriatric Emergency Medicine Initiative
Resident Training Lecture Objectives

Acute and Chronic Pain Management of the Elderly Patient

Presenter: Dr. Henry Schuitema
Length: 1 hour
Target Audience:
- Emergency Medicine Residents (Primary)
- Internal Medicine Residents
- Emergency Medicine Faculty

Presentation Overview:
The goals of acute pain management in the Emergency Department are the same, regardless of age. For example, there should be no hesitancy by the emergency medicine physician in conjunction with a surgical consultant to treat pain in the elderly patient with acute surgical emergencies. Often, treating pain improves the ability to perform a physical exam and improves the ability to diagnose. Treating elderly patients with chronic pain or an acute exacerbation of this chronic pain in the ED remains challenging due to limited medical history or records of past treatment regimens and the presence of comorbidities and medications that present risk of drug-drug or drug-disease interactions with the addition of a new pain-control regimen. In this session, the emergency medicine resident will learn to recognize and evaluate acute and chronic pain presentations through selected examples and identify the type and modality of treatment for that pain presentation.

Learning objectives:
At the end of this presentation, residents will be able to:
1. Perform a comprehensive, multi-dimensional assessment of the elderly patient presenting to the ED with acute or chronic pain, utilizing a focused history, physical examination, functional and psychosocial assessment and appropriate pain measurement instruments.
2. Evaluate for untreated pain as the causative factor of agitation or delirium in older patients when considering the broad differential diagnosis for these clinical presentations.
3. Increase awareness of untreated pain and use of non-verbal cues in agitated elderly patients with impairments in hearing, speech, and cognitive function.
4. Identify, both rapidly and accurately, the patient’s goals of care and develop an appropriate, patient-centered plan of treatment for pain control in the elderly patient with a serious or life threatening illness.
5. Discuss safety measures for the prevention of common ED iatrogenic pain complications from indwelling foley catheters, central line placement, and endotracheal intubation.
6. Prescribe and appropriately dose medications for the treatment of acute or chronic pain taking into consideration current medications, comorbidities, and age-related pathophysiologic changes.
7. Exercise caution when prescribing analgesic medications that increase morbidity in
the older patient at risk when used alone, in drug-drug, or drug-disease interactions,
including benzodiazepines, NSAIDs, opioids, μ-receptor agonists.
8. Manage opioid-related side-effects including constipation, hypotension, pruritus, and
nausea, when using narcotics in the emergency department.

Instructional Methods:
Didactic presentation with PowerPoint slides
Case-based discussion
Audience response questions

Evaluation Methods:
Pre-Test Items
Post-Test Items
Reaction survey

Resource(s):
YouTube Lecture Presentation:
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8HbmQ_l0nAk&feature=plcp

References:
1. Cavalieri TA. Managing pain in geriatric patients. J Am Osteopath Assoc
5. Lawton MP, Brody EM. Assessment of older people: Self-maintaining and