

Reducing Use Of Hospitals By Elderly People

Researchers from the Department of Preventive Medicine and Public Health from the University of Granada have carried out a study with patients over 60.

The main conclusion they have come to is that an efficient response in primary care would reduce hospitalizations in more than 50% of the cases caused by three of the most frequent pathologies in older population: diabetic ketoacidosis, digestive haemorrhage and chronic bronchitis.

The study, carried out by Doctor Isabel Valenzuela López and supervised by Professors Aurora Bueno Cavaillas and José Luis Gastón Morata, has analyzed the main reasons for hospitalizations caused by the pathologies that demand an effective response in primary care and how these hospitalizations could be avoided.

The significance of such study is unquestionable, considering that the elderly population represents the highest public health consumption. Furthermore, the percentage of the Spanish population who reaches an elderly age has risen from 26% at the beginning of the 20th century to 86% today.

Chronic diseases

“The expanding proportion of elderly people has altered the pattern of illnesses which were once frequent - explains the author of this project- and now chronic diseases, a higher need of medicines and social care needs prevail”. All this means a higher consumption of both public health resources and national health assistance since the elderly population makes up between 40-45% of the hospitalizations, occupies 40-50% of doctors working in primary care, and is the recipient of more than 50% of the medicines prescribed in hospitals.

The researchers interviewed all the family doctors from seven different hospitals in Granada and asked them about the main reasons for hospitalizations in patients over 60 as well as to what extent these hospitalizations, caused by the problems described above, could be prevented. The interviewed professionals answered that a more efficient response in primary health care would reduce in more than 50% the hospitalizations caused by three pathologies: diabetic ketoacidosis, digestive haemorrhage and chronic bronchitis. However, in patients suffering from cancer and acute coronary syndrome an enhanced primary care would only reduce the hospitalizations by 25%. Scientists analysed 6 health problems, 3 chronic diseases (acute coronary syndrome, chronic bronchitis and diabetes) and three acute ones (pneumonia, transient ischemic attack and digestive haemorrhage) to find the connection between primary care effectiveness and the prevention of hospitalizations caused by these health problems. 717 patients over 60 were taken for the study, with an average age of 75.65 years 59.97% of whom were men.

Twice the risk

Isabel Valenzuela outlines that, according to the study, “each new chronic disease suffered by a patient means twice the risk of hospitalization by any of the 6 studied pathologies” which means that anyone suffering 5 or more diseases would present a probability of hospitalization 61 times higher than someone healthy. Moreover, each new medicine prescribed increases the risk of hospitalization. Those patients who have been taking 5 or more different medications for the last 6 months have a 4.84 times increase in their risk of hospitalization for these pathologies.

In short, the number of pathologies suffered by individual as well as past hospitalizations for causes different to those studied was considered as a risk factor for hospitalizations, although more significantly for severe cases. The amount of medicines consumed and the number of visits to the hospital was related with a higher frequency of hospitalization, especially in chronic cases.

Part of the results from this study has been published in October in the prestigious journal “Atención Primaria”. Furthermore, manuscripts will widely spread the significant results in specialized journals.-Universidad de Granada

Ads by Google

- [Medical Information System](#)
- [Health Research](#)
- [Medical Information](#)
- [Health Statistics](#)

Submitted by harminka on Sat, 2008-03-08 19:55.

Comments

Post new comment

Your name:

Anonymous

E-mail:

The content of this field is kept private and will not be shown publicly.

Homepage:

Subject:

Posted in: [Health](#) [Elderly](#) [Elderly Health](#) [Elderly Patients](#)

Find Your Ancestors

Don't Dry Out Your Bank Account to Find Your Ancestors. Join Us Now [www.worldvitalrecords.com](#)

Departed ancestors

Departed ancestors affect all of us everyday - learn more [www.spiritualresearchfoundation.org](#)

Death Records Search

Find Info on Death Records Search. Your Business Solution Business.com [www.business.com](#)

Naval Birth Injury Claims

Helping U.S. Navy Families w/ Birth Injury Claims- Call Today [www.NavyMedicalMalpractice.com](#)

Submit your news



Web huliq.com

Google Search

Navigation

[Huliq Blog](#)
[News Archive](#)

Similar Stories

[New Study Sheds Light On Excessive Drinking Among The Elderly](#)
[Needs Of California's Seniors Are Underestimated](#)
[Elderly More Likely To Deny Smoking When Asked](#)
[Elderly Medicare, Medicaid Patients Not Receiving Quality Care](#)
[Paramedics Can Provide An Effective Alternative To Stanc Ambulance Service In Community](#)

Today's Top Stories

[EPA Says Water Contamination At "Very Low Levels"](#)
[Sally Kern Says Gays Are Biggest Threat To American Society](#)
[Redneck Shop Creates Social Dispute In S.C.](#)
[Japan's Nikkei Drops Nearly 2 % Caused By U.S. Fallir Jobs](#)
[Oil Eases Below USD 105 In Asian Trade On US Conce](#)
[BBC Launches Arabic TV Service](#)
[Pancreatic Cancer Treatment Hope For Patrick Swayze](#)