

Geriatric problems in patients at *Siddha* teaching hospital *Kaithady*: a survey

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Abstract

Our society has given great attention to the care of the elders for a long time. Old people were respected as equal to God in many nuclear families. All the family members obeyed them and followed their advices. This set up is broken and elders facing so many problems now a days. The objective of this study was to identify the common geriatric problems of old people. This survey was conducted in geriatric clinic at *Siddha* Teaching Hospital, Kaithady from October 2013 to December 2013. 80 Elderly patients completed age of 55 years were selected by simple random sampling in the geriatric clinics. The data was collected by interviewer administered questionnaire. The majority was in 60 – 70 years of age group (i.e 56%). 60% (48) were females. 80% (64) were Hindus and 20% (16) were Christians. 50% (40) studied between 5 – 10 years. 60% (48) were not engaged in any permanent job previously. Only 19% (15) were pensioners. 95% (76) married and 89% (71) had children. 5% (04) lived separately, 15% (12) were widows and 6% (05) lost their wives. 56% (45) lived with their children and 30% (24) lived alone and 14% (11) lived with helpers. Only 19% (15) were vegetarians. All were reported getting sufficient food. Unhappy life reported in 14 (18%). 28% (22) Used betel, tobacco 10% (08), smoking 9% (07) and taking alcohol 10% (08). 40% (32) used spectacles. Most of them had multiple complaints. Hearing problems 28% (22), dental problems 51% (41), arthritis 45% (36), loss of memory 46% (37), sleep disturbances 46% (37), back ache 44% (35), hypertension 25% (20), diabetes mellitus 21% (17), cholesterol 29% (23), skin diseases 19% (15), neuritis 20% (16), piles 6% (05), asthma 11% (09), depression 18% (14), mental fear 13% (10), anxiety 11% (09), loss of appetite 26% (21), head ache 21% (17), tremor 11% (09), constipation 15% (12). 23% (18) had strong family history of some diseases. 26% (21) attended special clinics for western medicine also. All these patients wished to get *Siddha* Medical treatment for their illnesses especially for arthritis, back ache, skin diseases, piles, neuritis, and loss of appetite, tremor and constipation. They need treatment for non- communicable diseases and psychological support.

Key words: Elders, nuclear family, geriatric clinic, *Siddha* treatment, old people

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