Palliative Care Assessment in Geriatric Oncology

Questions

what are palliative assessments, in addition / contrast to geriatric assessments?

what are the challenges of performing palliative assessments in older people compared to younger patients?

is there a consensus on an adjusted, minimal palliative geriatric assessment?
Palliative Assessments

**Goals of assessment**
- Detect suffering and distress
- Account for multidimensional approach
- Respect subjective and individual experiences
- Check for important syndromes (pain, breathlessness, fatigue, constipation, cachexia)
- Identify family suffering
- Acknowledge patients‘ uncertainty - prognosis
- Approach patients‘ priorities and place of death

Illness consequences, suffering, death is „near“
### Palliative vs geriatric assessment

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Geriatric assessments</th>
<th>Palliative assessments</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Function (ADL, IADL, PS)</td>
<td>Multidimensional, subjective and distress</td>
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<tr>
<td>Comorbidity (Satariano’s)</td>
<td>Syndromes (pain, fatigue, constipation, cachexia)</td>
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<td>Cognitive impairment (MMSQ)</td>
<td>Family suffering</td>
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<tr>
<td>Depression (GDS)</td>
<td>Patients’ priorities &amp; will</td>
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<td>Fatigue (BFI)</td>
<td>Prefered place of death</td>
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„Extended“ Function

Consequences, suffering
Challenges of palliative assessments in older people

Impaired sensory or motor function
High frequency of cognitive impairment
Elderly patients tend to underreport symptoms
Role of family members (?)
Important clinical problems leading to suffering may be different compared to younger patients
Priorities in decisions on desirable outcomes of medical interventions may be different...
is there a consensus on an adjusted, minimal palliative geriatric assessment?

A consensus on the assessments required to amend geriatric assessment batteries by sentinel palliative care aspects has not been agreed on

→ Multidisciplinary work
Conclusions

suffering and distress of pts & family
multidimensional approach
subjective and individual experiences
patients‘ priorities and place of death

Challenging cognitive impairment
goal-direction: pat, not family

Multidisciplinary work
Integrated Oncology and Palliative Care and Geriatric