

SCREENING FOR DEPRESSION IN ELDERLY URBAN POPULATION

A. Raul, S.M. Sagare

Community Medicine, Bharati Vidyapeeth Medical College Pune, Pune, India

Introduction: Depression is a treatable medical condition and one of the most frequent causes of emotional distress in older adults. Untreated depression can delay recovery or worsen the outcome of other medical illnesses via increased morbidity or mortality. Depression is NOT a part of normal aging.

Objectives: To determine the prevalence of depression among the elderly population. To identify the risk factors with respect to depression in elderly.

Material and methods: Study design: Cross sectional study. Study setting: Community based. Sample size: 216. Study area: Southern part of urban Pune city. Inclusion criteria: Age more than 60 yrs of age. Study tool: Predesigned Questionnaire including WHO 5 Well being index and Mastering depression in Primary care version 2.2 was administered.

Results: The prevalence of depression was 21.2% in the geriatric population. Widowed state, financial dependency, living in nuclear family and medical illnesses were the major stressors.

Conclusion: The present study found that widowed state, retirement, medical illness and residing in a nuclear family system are strong predictors of depression in the elderly.

Recommendation: Social support programs for the elderly must be developed to ensure their well-being. Awareness about risk factors would help in designing appropriate strategies for prevention of depressive disorders in geriatric population.