

**PRACTICAL ADVICE
FROM A
GERIATRICIAN ON
ALZHEIMER'S
DISEASE**

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MEETING THE HEALTHCARE NEEDS OF PATIENTS WITH DEMENTIA

- ◉ Maintaining Equilibrium or Homeostasis is the key!
- ◉ Division of Labor!
- ◉ Regular visits (monthly) with primary care physician.
- ◉ Working with reputable home health team
- ◉ Structured activities and environment

NUTRITION AND HYDRATION IN PATIENTS WITH DEMENTIA

- ◎ Stable Weight is the best overall measure of health of patient with dementia.
- ◎ Maintaining hydration with good urine output is the best way to avoid UTI/Constipation.
- ◎ Nutrition is directly related to immune system.
- ◎ Use nutritional supplement, medication to stimulate appetite when appropriate.

PHYSICAL AND SOCIAL ACTIVITIES FOR PATIENTS WITH DEMENTIA

- ◉ Muscle cells and Brain cells are very similar:
- ◉ When stimulated both will grow.
- ◉ Doing physical exercises stimulate muscle growth.
- ◉ Doing brain exercises stimulate growth of dendrites (connection between brain cells)
- ◉ Physical exercises also improve blood flow to brain and help brain cells function better.
- ◉ Both physical and social activities help dementia patients avoid boredom!!

GERIATRIC EVALUATION AND MANAGEMENT TEAM

- ◉ Division of Labor allow each team member to do their best work to help the patients.
- ◉ Physician function as the team leader
- ◉ Pharmacist looks over medication for side effects and ongoing monitoring.
- ◉ Podiatrist performs foot care which is often neglected and causing pt to fall.
- ◉ NP/PA work with physician to do urgent visits when physicians are not available.
- ◉ Psychologist/ psychiatrist help address issues of depression which is very common (up to 80% patients with dementia).

Q&A

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