Priority Topic: **ELDERLY**

Key Features:

1. In the elderly patient taking multiple medications, **avoid polypharmacy** by:
   - monitoring **side effects**.
   - periodically **reviewing medication** (e.g., is the medication still indicated, is the dosage appropriate).
   - monitoring for **interactions**.

**What you should study:**

✓ **STOPP/START criteria 2015**
✓ **Deprescribing: A Primary Care Perspective 2016**

2. In the elderly patient, actively **inquire about non-prescription medication use** (e.g., herbal medicines, cough drops, over-the-counter drugs, vitamins).

✓ **Just do it!**
3. In the elderly patient, screen for **modifiable risk factors** (e.g., visual disturbance, impaired hearing) to **promote safety** and **prolong independence**.

**See also** Priority Topic: Disability

**What you should study:**

✓ Vision Screening over 65 CMAJ 2018
✓ Hearing Loss NEJM 2017
✓ Disability Evaluation AAFP 2015
✓ Frailty Full Guideline BC 2017
✓ Clinical Frailty Scale visual - Dalhousie 2009

4. In the elderly patient, **assess functional status** to:

   - anticipate and discuss the eventual need for changes in the living environment.
   - ensure that **social support** is adequate.

**What you should study:**

✓ Functional Decline AAFP 2013

5. In older patients with diseases prone to **atypical presentation**, do not exclude **these diseases** without a thorough assessment (e.g., pneumonia, appendicitis, depression).

**What you should study:**

✓ Current Diagnosis & Treatment: Geriatrics 2014 - Atypical Presentations

You can access the whole of Chapter 7 via Access Medicine