

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).

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