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GRT **STUDY TO FIND OUT THE PREVALENCE OF
PSYCHIATRIC PROBLEMS IN GERIATRIC AGE GROUP
IN URBAN AREA OF LUCKNOW CITY.**

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Abstract:- Present cross sectional study was done to find out the psychiatric problems in elderly persons living in urban area. Elderly are prone for various types of psychosomatic disorders due to inherent and environmental factors. Common psychiatric illnesses found in geriatric age group in this study are depression, adjustment disorders, anxiety disorders & panic disorders etc. High prevalence in geriatric patients needs special attention to improve their overall health statuses.

Keywords: geriatric, psychiatric illness, urban.

INTRODUCTION :-

Life expectancy has been increasing leading to increase in geriatric population throughout the world. As the person becomes older he/she becomes more prone to develop various disorders due to continuous changes occurring within the body. Moreover, elderly become less productive in terms of monetary-earnings, thus become prone to be neglected by the family. Co-existing physical illnesses, disability, diminished physical activity; along with the chances of mental deprivation lead to high chance of psychiatric problems. In addition to this, the brain, due to ageing process, becomes more vulnerable for dementia, depression, Alzheimer's disease and other psychiatric illnesses. Diagnosing and treating older patients presents more difficulties than their counter younger persons, because older people may have co-existing chronic medical illnesses, may be getting multiple medications and may have reduced physiologic reserves. Prevalence of dementia increases steeply with age and is worsened by cerebrovascular diseases. Depressive symptoms are present in about 15% of geriatric population. Prevalence further increases along with age. Severe depression may be the precipitating cause for suicidal attempt. If not diagnosed correctly, depression in elderly may be confused with dementia and/ or Schizophrenia. Geriatric population is also prone for delusions which may be precipitated by adverse circumstances and co-morbid severe medical illnesses. Anxiety disorders, including phobia and stress disorders are also increased in elderly. All these psychiatric disorders are further worsened by deprivation or disturbance of sleep. Sleep related problems are more common in elderly. A galore of studies has been done to find out the prevalence of various psychiatric disorders in general population. However, very few studies have been done to find out the prevalence of psychiatric disorders in geriatric population. Moreover, there is seldom any study in literature which involves urban geriatric population. Therefore present study was done to find out the prevalence of psychiatric disorders amongst geriatric population of urban area.

MATERIALS AND METHOD:

Study was short durational (of 2 months) and cross sectional. 10 physicians from various parts of the city were

Study To Find Out The Prevalence Of Psychiatric Problems In Geriatric Age Group In Urban Area Of Lucknow City.

selected for the study. All these physicians were catering mainly the urban population. Elderly patients (>60 yrs of age) coming to physician for any reason were requested to give the responses for 'self made questionnaire with 20 points'. Before asking questions, consents from patients were taken. The questionnaire compiled of questions related to demographic data, abnormality of emotions, behavior, relationships, sleep etc.

RESULTS:

Table 1. Age wise distribution of psychiatric disorders-

Age group (yrs)	Number of elderly interviewed	Number of elderly having psychiatric disorders	Percentage
60-65	61	24	39.3
65-70	32	8	25
70-75	24	9	37.5
75-80	16	6	38
80 or more	6	5	83.3
TOTAL	137	52	

Table 2. Gender-wise distribution of psychiatric disorders-

Gender	Number of elderly interviewed	Number of elderly having psychiatric disease	Percentage
male	85	32	38
female	52	20	39
total	137	52	

Table 3. Prevalence of psychiatric disorders in different socio-economic groups-

Socioeconomic state	Number of elderly interviewed	Number of elderly having psychiatric disease	Percentage
low	37	14	35
middle	65	29	44.6
high	35	9	25.7
total	137	52	

CONCLUSION:

Present study further emphasizes that elderly are not only at risk of somatic illnesses due to natural ageing process but also they have increased risk for development of psychiatric illnesses due to associated circumstances. As the person becomes old, his/her physiologic processes become limited and usually the person harbors multiple co-existing illnesses including cardiovascular, rheumatic and neurologic diseases. The medications which are given for treatment of these ailments may also have propensity to precipitate psychiatric disorders. Due to all these factors, i.e. increased prevalence of psychiatric illnesses, limited metabolic capacity of older people, chances of polypharmacy; elderly need special personalized consideration. Physicians should be sensitized for history-taking and care of elderly regarding psychiatric illnesses whenever patient comes to them.

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