

Old Age

Chap. 13

- 3 periods of old age:
 - Young old 65-74
 - Old 75-90
 - Very old 90 and older

Characteristics of Elderly Population

- Fastest growing segment of population in this country.
- Life expectancy longer for women than men.
- Most accurate predictor of expectancy is one biological parent's life span.

Psychosocial Theories

- Disengagement
- Activity
- Continuity develops mental theories

Psychosocial Tasks for Old Age

- Changing body image
- Family roles
- Work & leisure patterns
- Sexuality
- Facing the inevitability of death

According to Erickson: Psychosocial Development

- Developmental task of EGO Integrity
 - People who lack integrity develop helplessness and despair.

Psychosocial Development

- Feelings of worth
 - ↓
 - Process of reminiscing
 - Life review
 - Gives meaning to lives
- Cognitive
 - Retain cognitive abilities until later in life
 - Memory changes with advancing age
 - Greater losses in short-term than in long-term memory

Moral Beliefs

- Developed from a lifetime of experiences & interactions with others.
- Find peace & satisfaction through spirituality & religion.

Nutrition

- Fluid balance: Intake should be balanced between water intake & output. 1000 ml per day.
- Good nutrition prevents late-life diseases & improve a person's response to treatment.
- Affected by: lifestyle, changes in body composition, use of medications, inflation/incomes, social situations (living alone).
- Nutritional intake – 60% carbs 12-14% proteins, less than 30% fats.

Sleep/Rest

- Need more rest and less sleep than younger adults.
- Helps restore the body's energy reserve & prevent fatigue.

Exercise

- Maintains physical fitness across the life span.

Health

- More likely to suffer from at least one chronic condition, many have multiple conditions.

Leading causes of death

- Heart disease
- Cancer
- Strokes
- Arteriosclerosis
- Diabetes
- Lung disease
- Cirrhosis of liver

Health promotion

- Continued exercise
- Diet modification
- Healthy lifestyle

Accidents/Risk factors

- Changes in sensory perception
- Changes in gait
- Neurological disorders
- Increased risk for falls

Abuse/Crime

- Cross all boundaries
 - Social
 - Cultural
 - economic

Assistance

- Social security
- Medicare
- Medicaid

Depression/Suicide

- Multiple losses
- Diseases
- Medication usage

Biological Theories of Aging

- Clock work
 - Connective tissues have internal clock, genetically programmed to stop cell production.
- Free-radicals
 - Unstable molecules combined with proteins, lipids, cell organelles, causes mutation & changes cellular functions.

Biological Theories of Aging cont'd

- Wear & tear
 - Cells cease to function after repeated injury, causing deprivation of nutrients & malfunction of cells.
- Immune system failure
 - Slow response to invaders causes decline in immune function.
- Auto-immune
 - Weakened immune system fails to recognize own tissue, causing self destruction.

Biological Theories of Aging cont'd

- Factors affecting sleep
 - Physical discomfort
 - Anxiety
 - Nocturia

Biological Theories of Aging cont'd

- Life expectancy
 - Average number of years that a person is likely to live.
- Aging
 - A normal, inevitable, progressive process that produces irreversible changes over an extended period of time.
- Senescence
 - The symptoms of normal aging.
- Gerontology
 - The study of normal aging process

Biological Theories of Aging cont'd

- Atrophy
 - Wasting away, shrinking of tissue
- Demographics
 - Statistical characteristics of a group of people
- By phase
 - Curvature of thoraces spine (exaggerated with age called dowager's hump)
- Hips fusion
 - A pigmented metabolic waste product that has been found in greater amounts in various organs of the aged body.

Biological Theories of Aging cont'd

- Lumen
 - The opening or diameter of a vessel
- Residual volume
 - Amount of air remaining in lungs after forceful exhalation
- Xerostomia
 - A reduction in saliva & resultant drying of the mouth

Biological Theories of Aging cont'd

- Dysphagia
 - Difficulty swallowing
- Peristalsis
 - Wave like muscular movement in the gastrointestinal tract
- Integumentary system
 - Consists of skin, hair, nails, oil & sweat glands.
- Homeostasis
 - A balance of internal environment of the body

Biological Theories of Aging cont'd

- Senile lentigo
 - Irregular pigmentation of skin
 - Age spots
- Melanocytes
 - Pigmented skin cells
- Pruritus
 - Itching
- Keratosis
 - Skin thickening

Biological Theories of Aging cont'd

- Neurons
 - Nerve cells
- Lacrimal ducts
 - Tear ducts
- Cerumen
 - Ear wax
- Tinnitus
 - Ringing in the ears

Biological Theories of Aging cont'd

- Nephrons
 - Functional working units of the kidneys.
- Reminiscence
 - A process of remembering and discussing key life events.
- Ageism
 - Discrimination or prejudice against older persons.
- Life span
 - The maximum number of years that a species is capable of surviving.
- Opacity
 - A clouding of the lens of the eye.

Questions & Answers

- Majority of older Americans live in:
 - Their own homes alone or with families
- Psychological theories of aging serve to explain:
 - A person's life satisfaction.
- Older people are at increased risk for falling because of:
 - A shift in the center of gravity.
- As the older person loses adipose tissue:
 - Temperature control is difficult.
- The characteristic hearing loss of old age means that the nurse must communicate in:
 - Low, moderate tones.

Questions & Answers cont'd

- Harry's wife of 40 dies of heart failure. Harry says "She just got a clean bill of health". The stage of death & dying per Keble's-Ross:
 - Denial
- The following retirement phase is characterized by a feeling of euphoria:
 - Honeymoon
- Dementia in the older adult:
 - A symptom of an underlying disorder.