

▶ Patient Care Aspects Related to Geriatric Patients Performing Nuclear Medicine Procedures

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Nuclear medicine procedures have a multitude of clinical applications, including some particular clinical applications specific to the elderly. Geriatric and gerontologic patients benefit by nuclear medicine procedures in the context of some diseases specific to the elderly or in the context of some other illness that tangentially may affect also the old persons. There is a clear difference between adult patients and geriatric patients. Geriatric patients may need special imaging protocols, especially regarding administrated activities, may benefit by a different therapeutic approach in relation with the radiation protection, due to the particular way how the ionizing radiation may affect the old organism.

Besides the specific aspects of nuclear medicine aiming the geriatric patients, a specific health care management is necessary. The technologists must be aware about the specific needs of the geriatric patients, must have knowledge about the aging mechanism and geriatric specific diseases to be able to cope what is expected from the medical team when geriatric patient is in discussion. The patient must be holistically approached by the medical team, when he performs nuclear medicine or other medical procedures. For this, the team must identify the needs of the geriatric patient, to implement and give special health care procedures.

The technologist, by the nature of his profession, is the member of the medical team who spend the largest period of time with the patients during nuclear medicine procedures. It is important to rapidly identify the needs of the patient and to implement an appropriate nursing plan to lead the patient to a state of independence and to make him to be able to perform the procedure even if it is a diagnostic or a therapeutic procedure.

To understand the special situation of a geriatric patient it is necessary vocation, special training and skills. The technologists must be able to approach all the problems that may interpolate between the patient and the success of medical procedure.

Nowadays, important voices frequently speak about the extended and advanced practice or competencies in nuclear medicine technology, but the ability to communicate with the patient, the ability to recognize the patient's nursing problems, the skills to implement a pertinent nursing management during nuclear medicine procedures, must be a part of the basic requirements for a skilled nuclear medicine technologists.

Keywords: geriatric patient, gerontologic patient, patient care, nursing, nuclear medicine technologist, advance practice, extended practice

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