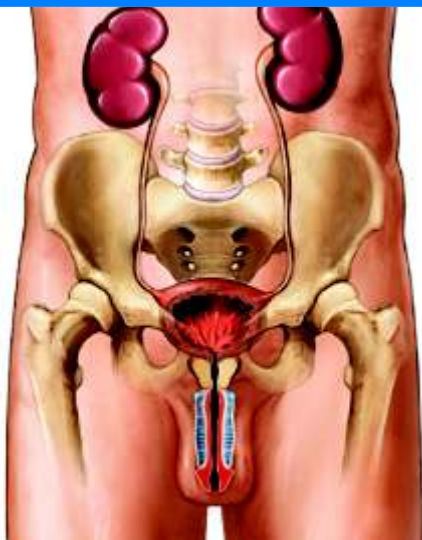


# Common Mental and Physical Health Problems of Elderly: Care hints for Caregivers



## **GENITO URINARY SYSTEMS**



Issued in the interest and for the care of the elderly by

## **THE DEPARTMENT OF GERIATRIC MENTAL HEALTH**

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## **Benign Prostatic hyperplasia (BPH)**

Enlargement of prostate gland is an expected phenomenon of aging in man and presents in 80% of men by age of 80 yrs. As this gland enlarges, it presses on the urethra and bladders and interferes with the flow of urine from the bladder.

Early symptom is difficulty in starting urination, called hesitancy. The urinary stream is also difficult to stop, and there may be dribbling. Bladder wall is thickened, so the volume of bladder decreases causing increase in frequency of urination. Frequent passage of small volumes of urine called urgency is also a problem.

Much of the treatment for benign prostatic hyperplasia is watchful waiting. Every patient with BPH requires medical or surgical treatment at any stage of gland enlargement. Two drugs Finasteride and Terazosin are used in the treatment of BPH. They facilitate passage of urine.

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Patients and attendants should be aware that if they see blood in urine, loss of sex drive while taking finasteride and terazocin, nasal stiffness and weakness or dizziness on rising from a sitting or lying position, the physician/urosurgeon should be consulted. The curative treatment now a days is surgical removal of prostate. The operation is safe through urethral route, called as TURP.

## **Vaginitis**

Inflammation involving vagina is a common complaint in elderly women. The normal vaginal discharge decreases in quantity with aging, and it becomes less acidic.

After menopause changes in vagina occur, it increases the susceptibility to infections. These changes result from a decrease in the amount of estrogen.

The prime symptom of vaginitis is itching. It may be felt around the vagina. Associated with the itching, vaginal discharge is also occasionally seen, which may be bloody as well.

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The care givers should know that many topical medicines are available to treat any infection and to reverse the menopausal changes in the vagina.

Sexual intercourse should be avoided while vaginitis is active. It is best to wear all cotton under garments, which can help to keep the vaginal area dry.

## **Menopause**

A woman, amenorrhic for a minimum of 12 months period, is said to have developed menopause. During the perimenopause, the ovarian follicles gradually decline with age, estradiol and inhibin production by the ovary decreases, and follicle stimulating hormone and luteinizing hormone levels rise.

Menopausal symptoms are hot flashes, night sweats, irregular periods, menstrual irregularities, loss of libido and vaginal dryness. In post menopausal women, depression is very common and it is because of the changes in estrogen levels. Midlife depression symptoms are depressed mood,

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decreased interest or pleasure in activities, changes in appetite, change in sleep patterns, fatigue or loss of energy, difficulty in concentrating, excessive feeling of guilt or worthlessness, thoughts of suicide, extreme restlessness and irritability.

Anti depressants along with estrogen gives much improvement. Well balanced diet is mandatory. Refined sugar, caffeine, alcohol and chocolate consumption should be decreased. Use of calcium and B- complex may also decrease symptoms. Regular mild exercise is helpful.

For further information & treatment contact:

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