



Practical Advice from a Geriatrician on Alzheimer's Disease

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Meeting the Healthcare Needs of Patients with Dementia

- **Maintaining Equilibrium is the key!**
- Division of Labor!
- Monthly visits with primary care physician
- Working with specially trained health team
- Structured activities and environment

Nutrition and Hydration in Patients with Dementia



- **Stable Weight** is the best overall measure of health of patient with dementia
- Use nutritional supplement, medication to stimulate appetite when appropriate

Nutrition and Hydration Continued ...

- Maintaining hydration with good urine output is the best way to avoid UTI/Constipation
- **Nutrition is directly related to immune system**

Physical and Social Activities for Patients with Dementia



- Muscle cells and Brain cells are very similar:
When stimulated both will grow!
- Physical exercises stimulate muscle growth
- Brain exercises stimulate growth of connections between brain cells

Physical and Social Activities Continued ...

- Physical exercises also improve blood flow to the brain and help brain cells function better
- Both physical and social activities help dementia patients avoid boredom

Geriatric Evaluation and Management Team (GEM)



- Physician function as the team leader
- Pharmacist looks over medication for side effects and ongoing monitoring
- Division of Labor allow each team member to do their best work to help the patients

GEM Continued ...

- Podiatrists perform foot care which can help prevent falls
- NP/PA perform urgent visits when physicians are not available
- Psychologist / Psychiatrist address issues of depression which is very common (*up to 80% patients with dementia*).

Q&A

