

Anemia in senior citizens

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Abstract

Present study was carried out in Tertiary care Govt. Hospital, Solapur-Maharashtra. We studied-150 patients of anemia above 60 yrs. of age. Each case was studied with clinical examination and following investigations –Hb%, peripheral smear. Sr. Iron, Sr. Proteins, PCV, Stool & urine exam, ECG.X-ray chest, bone marrow for stainable iron. In present study male gender predominated. Common symptoms were breathlessness and easy fatigue. Commonest etiology was chronic diseases followed by iron deficiency. Tuberculosis and liver cirrhosis were common diseases causing anemia. Cause of iron deficiency was nutritional followed by per rectal bleeding.

Key Words: Easy fatigue, iron deficiency, chronic diseases.

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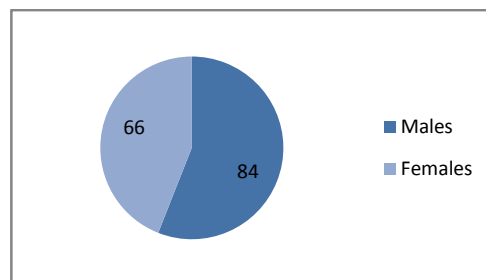
MATERIAL AND METHODS

In present study all patients above 60 years of age with males having hemoglobin below 13 g.m.% & females having Hb below 12 g.m.% were selected. Investigations done including Hb%, complete Peripheral smear, packed cell volume, Sr. Iron, Total iron binding capacity, serum proteins, reticulocyte count, E.C.G., stool & urine examination. Bone marrow examination for stainable iron was done in suspected cases of severe iron deficiency anemia. Each patient was subjected to thorough dental examination.

INTRODUCTION

Anemia is common in elderly and prevalence increases with age. If this is not treated in time it leads to complications like congestive cardiac failure, ischemic heart diseases & peripheral neuropathy. Associated anemia contributes to comorbidities & hampers quality of life. The present study was carried out in Tertiary care Government Hospital Solapur on 150 elderly patients above 60 years of age. We studied anemia in senior citizens with detail history, clinical examination & complete investigations. Aim of the study was to find out causative factors responsible for anemia & chronic diseases leading to anemia in these subjects.

OBSERVATION AND RESULTS

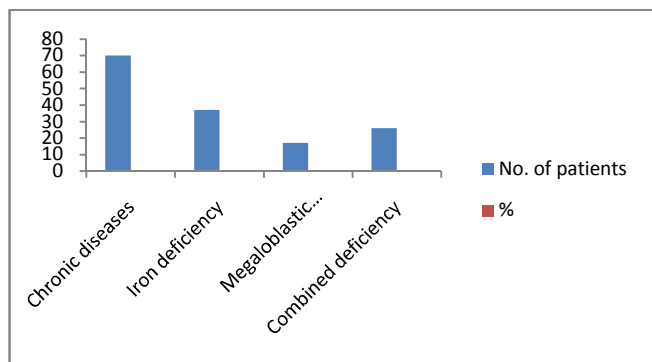


Among 150 elderly patients, 84 were males & 66 were females. Patients common presenting symptoms were breathlessness, fatigue and swelling over feet. In etiology, Anemia due to chronic diseases was the most common

cause which was found in 70 (46.67%) patients. Iron deficiency anemia was found in 37 (29.67%) patients megaloblastic anemia was found in 17 (11.33%) patients & combined deficiency anemia in 26 (17.33%) patients.

Table 1: Showing cause of anemia

Cause of Anemia	No. of patients	%
Chronic diseases	70	46.67%
Iron deficiency	37	29.67%
Megaloblastic Anemia	17	11.33%
Combined deficiency	26	17.33%



In Patients of anemia due to chronic diseases, we found that tuberculosis was the most common cause which was in 36% patients (15.42%) Liver cirrhosis was the 2nd most common cause which was found in 22 (31.42%) Patients. Chronic renal failure was seen in 04 patients & malignancies in 4 patients. SLE, Rheumatoid arthritis and chronic urinary tract infection were the rare causes.

Table 2: Diseases leading to anaemia

Diseases leading to anaemia	No. of patients
Tuberculosis	36
Liver Cirrhosis	22
Chronic renal failure	4
Malignancies	4
Rheumatoid arthritis	2
S L E	1
Pylonephritis	1

Table 3: Malignancies detected in patients

Malignancies	No. of cases
Carcinoma-colon	01
Carcinoma-stomach	01
Carcinoma-bronchus	01
Chronic Myeloid lukaemia	01

DISCUSSION

Present study is comparable to the study by K G Prakash *et al* where anemia due to chronic inflammation was common etiology(26%) followed by iron deficiency (24%) and hematological malignancies (18%). In study by Vanamala Alvar *et al* most common type of anemia was normocytic followed by microcytic. Where as we found microcytic anemia to be most common followed by dimorphic type.

CONCLUSIONS

Anemia is not always a consequence of aging. Physician should thoroughly investigate the patient and find out etiology of anemia. In present study each patient had a specific underlying cause of anemia. To improve life expectancy & quality of life one should treat chronic diseases at the earliest in elderly population & provide proper nutrition to them.

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