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ABSTRACT

Prevalence of Chronic Diseases in Palestinian Geriatrics and Common Pharmacological Interventions: A Cross-Sectional Study

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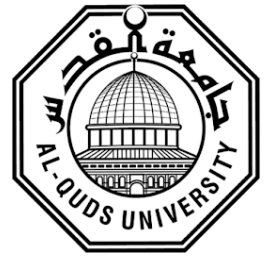
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Geriatrics are more susceptible to have multiple medical disorders due to different physiology and, hence, are more subjected to polypharmacy. This study investigates the prevalence of chronic diseases and medical conditions, used medications, and associated socio-demographic factors among the Palestinian geriatrics population. This was a cross-sectional study conducted during June 2013 and January 2014. The study population was Palestinian geriatrics ≥ 60 years old living in the West Bank and East Jerusalem. Interview-aided questionnaires were completed for participants by the surveying team. The questionnaires comprised of personal and socio-economical data, health condition, current medication, and medication knowledge and adherence. A total of 1192 Palestinian geriatrics participated in this study. The average participant age was 70.3 (SD=8.58) and ranged from 60-110 years. The sample comprised 659 (55.30%) females and 533 (44.70%) males. The majority of participants were retired or unemployed (83.60%), 81.90% were non-smokers, and 61.80% were married. Forty unique chronic diseases and conditions were reported. The mean number of diseases reported per participant was 2.33 (SD=1.68) and ranged from 0-11 conditions. These were divided into ten groups according to body systems. Cardiovascular, endocrine, and musculoskeletal conditions were most reported. 175 unique drugs were reported. The mean number of drugs per participant was 4.54 (SD= 2.83) and ranged from 1-17 drugs. The total number of drugs was strongly correlated with the total number of conditions (1192)= 0.628, $p > 0.001$. Commonly prescribed therapeutic agents were aspirin (575 incidents), angiotensin-converting enzyme inhibitors (403), diuretics (409), metformin (323), paracetamol (270), and proton pump inhibitors (275). To the



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best of our knowledge, this is the first prevalence study of chronic diseases among Palestinian geriatrics which comprised a large number of participants from all districts in the West Bank and East Jerusalem. These results provide information and recommendations that should be considered by Palestinian physicians, pharmacists, health professionals, and health policy makers.

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