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Spectrum of Clinical Infectious Diseases in Hospitalized Elderly Patients in the Southeast of Iran

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Abstract: Aim: The elderly have defective host defenses that compromise their ability to ward off infectious agents; factors influencing immunocompetence include impaired host defenses such as diminished cell-mediated immunity, changes in chronic diseases, medications, malnutrition and functional impairments. This study was conducted in order to determine the pattern of clinical infectious diseases in a series of hospitalized elderly patients. Materials and Methods: In this cross-sectional study, all elderly patients who were admitted to our hospital in Zahedan (Southeast Iran) between 2001 and 2006 were evaluated. We retrospectively reviewed the 1278 patients for diagnostic studies, risk factors, treatment options and morbidity and mortality rate. Results: Tuberculosis (TB) was the commonest infection (46%), followed by pneumonia (14.9%), bronchitis (13%), gastroenteritis (6.5%) and sepsis (3.9%). Most of the cases of TB were pulmonary (98.2%). Pulmonary aspergillosis was seen in only one case and was the least common infection in our patients (0.07%). Diabetes was seen as a risk factor in 4.3% of our patients. Six patients (0.4%) died during hospital stay due to myocardial infarction. Conclusions: Based on the results from this study, TB and bronchopulmonary infections are the most common infections in hospitalized elderly patients in the Southeast of Iran. Influenza and pneumococcal vaccines can limit the bronchopulmonary infections in this group.

Key Words: Infection, elderly patients, clinical diseases, tuberculosis

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