Dementia Rates to Rise 8% Over Next 20 Years

BY JONATHAN GARDNER

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People older than 95 are nearly 20 times as likely to die with dementia as those who die between the ages of 65 and 69, according to a population-based study in England and Wales. The research suggests that prevalence of dementia increases with age and that those who reach the age of 80 without mental impairment can still become disabled as they continue to age, suggesting that with increasing life expectancy the number of people with dementia will also increase, the investigators reported. Based on the results of the study, the researchers estimated that the number of people who die each year with dementia in England and Wales is 114,000 and 487,000 in the United States. The investigators analyzed data on 13,004 patients in the Medical Research Council Cognitive Function and Aging Study, which enrolled 13,004 patients at centers in Liverpool, Newcastle, Nottingham, Oxford, and Cambridge in England and Gowney in north Wales (PLoS Med 2006; 3 [11]: e3000397).

The study followed 2,558 patients who were classified as having severe cognitive impairment and 1,577 who were classified as having moderate/severe cognitive impairment as measured by the Geriatric Mental State interview.

Of the 768 people who died within 1 year of their last interview, 30% were suffering from dementia. Of those ages 65-69, just 6% had dementia, but of those age 95 and older, 58% were suffering from dementia, according to the study.

LED by Dr. Carol Brayne, professor of public health medicine at University of Cambridge, the researchers wrote that the prevalence of dementia reported in their study suggests that prevention may have a negligible effect in an aging society. It may be that, although there will be a preventable component to dementia giving us a small and important absolute reduction in expectation of dementia at given ages, there is also a component that is not amenable to such types of prevention,” the authors said. “Researchers may be doing those who are aging now and themselves a disservice in the future if they assume, and project to the public, that dementia and cognitive impairment can be prevented altogether during increasingly long lives.

Dementia

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London Bureau

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Dementia

Oxcarbazepine Found to Reduce AD Hypersexuality

MADRID — Oxcarbazepine appears to significantly decrease hypersexual behavior in patients with Alzheimer's disease. Dr. Joshua Shua-Haim reported in a poster at the 10th International Conference on Alzheimer's Disease and Related Disorders.

All 11 men in the small pilot study showed improvement in the behavior by 2 weeks of treatment, said Dr. Shua-Haim of the Jersey Shore University Medical Center, Neptune, N.J.

All of the patients lived in a special care unit in an assisted living facility. Treatment began with 150 mg oxcarbazepine daily. The dose was titrated by 150 mg daily, given in two divided doses, until the behavior was stabilized or the maximum of 900 mg daily was reached.

Hypersexual behavior resolved in all 11 patients, at an average dose of 600-750 mg/day, with sexual events were reported, and there were no changes in blood chemistry.

—Michèle G. Sullivan