



Chronic diseases and their symptoms

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Abstract

Chronic Disease is a disease which stays for a time period of three months or more. It can't be cured completely. In this paper, certain risk factors of chronic diseases are mentioned. There is a focus on various signs and symptoms and diagnosis of different chronic diseases. It also describes how to prevent a person from chronic disease and how to treat a person suffering from it. Medications used to cure chronic diseases are also listed in this paper.

Keywords: chronic, disease, medications, mentioned

Introduction

A disease which stays for the duration of 3 months or longer and may get worse with the passage of time is known as chronic disease. Chronic diseases generally occur in old age people. It can somehow be controlled but can't be cured completely. People suffering from chronic diseases must manage their daily symptoms that affect their quality of life, and experience some acute health problems and complications that can shorten the expectancy of their life. Some of the common types of chronic disease are: cancer, heart disease, stroke, diabetes, arthritis, obesity and asthma, viral diseases like HIV / AIDS, Hepatitis C. Chronic disease is the main cause of death. There are number of phases a chronic disease goes through: growing, shrinking or staying the same.

Risk Factors

The risk factors of chronic diseases vary with age and gender. Most of the common chronic diseases are caused by unhealthy diet, lifestyle, physical inactivities and metabolic risk factors that are also responsible for the resulting mortality. Thus, these conditions should be prevented by changing the general behaviour, such as quitting smoking, adopting a healthy diet, and increasing physical activity. The major risk factors for chronic diseases are Social determinants. Social factors include socioeconomic status, education level, and race/ethnicity. These are a major cause for the disparities observed in the care of chronic disease. Lack of access and delay in receiving care also results in worse outcomes for patients. There are some barriers to medical care which complicate patients monitoring and continuity in treatment. These can affect the mental health of a patient directly or indirectly.

Symptoms and diagnosis of some chronic diseases

Cancer: It is a disease in which there is uncontrollable division of abnormal body cell and body tissues are destroyed. Its types are: breast cancer, prostate cancer, colon cancer, melanoma, lung cancer, lymphoma etc. Its symptoms depend on the type and grade of the cancer. Some general symptoms found in every cancer patient are: weight loss, fatigue, persistent cough, unusual bleeding, and fever, change in voice, tissues masses etc. It can be diagnosed by

physical examination like change in colour of skin, enlargement of the organ. Blood tests and urine test are also done. CT Scan, MRI, PET, Ultrasound or X-rays are also done to test for the presence of cancer.

Stroke: It is the sudden death of brain cells due to the reduction in passage of oxygen, which is caused by the blockage of flow of blood or rupture of any artery to the brain. It can be either haemorrhagic or ischemic. Its symptoms are: weakness, paralysis, sudden loss of speech, loss of vision, severe and sudden headache without any known cause. Its risk factors are: diabetes, high blood pressure, high cholesterol, smoking, excessive intake of alcohol etc. It can be diagnosed by blood tests, MRI, ECG or EKG, ultrasound, cerebral angiography.

Heart Disease: It is the condition in which there is any disorder in heart. Its symptoms are: pressure, tightness, pain, squeezing or aching sensation in the chest or arm. It can spread to neck, jaws or back. Other symptoms are nausea, heartburn, cold sweat, fatigue, sudden dizziness, indigestion, shortness of breath, abdominal pain etc. Some heart diseases are: Coronary Artery Disease, Heart Arrhythmias, Heart Failure, Heart Valve Disease, Pericardial Disease, Cardiomyopathy, Congenital Heart Disease etc. Heart diseases are diagnosed by ECG, Holter Monitoring, Echocardiogram, Stress Test, Cardiac catheterization, CT Scan, Cardiac MRI etc.

Asthma: It is a condition in which a person feels difficulty in breathing. The airways become narrow and swell and produce extra mucus. Inflammation is also caused in airways. Its symptoms are: coughing, wheezing, chest tightness, shortness of breath. It can be allergic as well as non-allergic. It has 4 stages. These are: Mild intermittent, mild persistent, moderate persistent and severe persistent. It is diagnosed by lung function test, chest or sinus X-ray, allergy tests, sputum eosinophils.

Diabetes: Diabetes is identified by high blood sugar levels. It is of type 1 and type 2. Their common symptoms are: increased urine output, excessive thirst, weight loss, hunger, fatigue, skin problems, slow healing wounds, yeast

infections, frequent infection, vomiting, blurred vision etc. It is diagnosed on the basis of the plasma glucose criteria. It is diagnosed by blood test.

Arthritis: It is a condition that affects joints. Its most common form is Osteoarthritis. Some of the symptoms of arthritis are: fatigue, joint pain, joint tenderness, joint swelling, redness in joints, joint warmth, loss of joint range of motion, joint stiffness, fever, numbness etc. These symptoms can develop gradually or suddenly which depends on the type of arthritis.

It can be diagnosed by blood tests, X-rays etc

Treatment with a person suffering from chronic diseases: We can prevent and control the effects of chronic diseases by designing the circle of influence for disease control, i.e. how to treat with a person who is suffering from chronic disease. The chronic care model is:

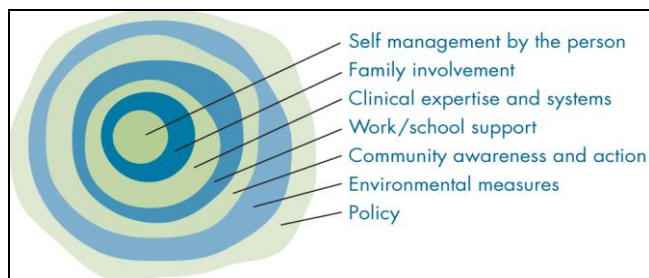


Fig 1

First of all, a person is the manager of his own health. A patient should control his disease by self-management, i.e. control of certain habits such as smoking and alcohol, intake of healthy diet, regular exercises etc. Family support and motivation helps the patient to fight with his disease. Regular check-up from the expert doctors and taking medicines properly helps to control the disease. The atmosphere where the patient is working should be friendly and supportive so that he may feel better and work well without affecting the health. Proper awareness of the disease helps to control it. The environment to which the patient belongs should be healthy. The policies to control chronic diseases are the proper vaccination and counsel and educate the people about these diseases. Tell them how harmful these diseases are and how can a person be prevented from these diseases. The government should organise and coordinate the services at various health centres to meet the needs of individuals.

Treatment of Chronic Diseases: It is very complicated to find a general treatment of chronic diseases because it is of different types. Each chronic disease has different medical conditions. The treatment can't cure the disease completely. These can be treated by regular exercising, proper intake of balanced diet, stop smoking and alcohol. Different medicines are also helpful in controlling these diseases.

Medications for some of the chronic diseases are: Beta Blockers, Statins, Interferon alfa, Opioids, Neurontin, Cortisone, Prednisone, Lamictal etc. However, there are some side effects of medicines also. Some of the side effects are: Depression, anxiety etc.

Objectives of Chronic Disease Prevention: To prevent the strength of the person, to improve the quality of life etc., to raise awareness among people, to promote collaboration and coordination, to promote development and implementation

of national policy etc.

Conclusion

Chronic Disease is a disease which stays for a time period of three months or more. It can't be cured completely. It can either remain same or grow or shrink. Certain risk factors of chronic diseases are mentioned here. Various signs and symptoms and diagnosis of different chronic diseases like heart disease, asthma, diabetes etc. are thoroughly discussed. It also explain how to prevent a person from chronic disease and how to treat a person suffering from it with the help of a model including self-management, involvement of family, clinical expertise, support of others, policies etc. Medications used to cure chronic diseases are also listed in this paper.

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