

## Care of the Asian Elderly with Hepatitis Virus Infection

Jane Maynard, APS-PHN  
Acute Communicable Disease Control  
County of Los Angeles  
Department of Public Health



## Learning Objectives

- Learn about ethnicity difference in the elderly population
- Learn about the care goals for elderly population
- Learn about care for elderly with hepatitis virus infection



## Background

- Approximately 12 million people have been exposed to hepatitis B virus in the USA
- It is estimated that over half of the 1.25 million individuals with chronic hepatitis B in the US are Asian Pacific Islanders (APIs)
- APIs have the highest incidence of hepatitis B
- Hepatitis B virus infection is a serious prevalent health problem among Asian immigrants

(Hann, Han, Block, Harris, Fisher & Atillasoy, 2008)



## Understanding the Elderly Population

- Biological factors
- Psychosocial issues
- Ethnicity differences



## Ethnicity Differences

- Personal-profound impacts and challenges on Asian culture:
  - Retirement
  - Family change
  - Caregiver vs. Care receiver
- Family-fearing to decide when and what to tell others about disease to protect dignity of loved ones
- Stigma/discriminatory practices



## Care Goals

- Increase self-care capacity
- Delay deterioration and decline
- Promote the highest possible quality of life
- Support in dying with comfort and dignity

## Ways to Care for the Elderly with Hepatitis Virus Infection

- Encourage elderly involvement in their own care
  - Maintain a healthy lifestyle by eating nutritious meals, getting exercise, resting when feeling tired, and avoiding alcohol
  - Educate the elderly not to take any drug or herbal supplement unless approved by their doctors
  - Do not share razors, toothbrushes or nail clippers

## Ways to Care for Elderly with Hepatitis Virus Infection – cont.

- Explain treatment options
  - There is **no** specific medical treatment for **acute** hepatitis A, B, and C. Your doctor can advise you on what you should do or what you should not do
  - **Once fully recovered:**
    - Cannot get hepatitis A, B, & C again
    - Cannot give the infection to others
  - For **chronic** (life-long) hepatitis B & C:
    - Antiviral medicines are available for treatment. Ask your doctor to see if your elderly are good candidates for treatment

## Ways to Care for Elderly with Hepatitis Virus Infection –cont.

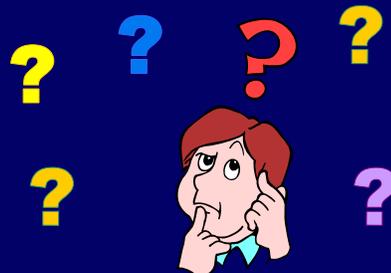
- Caregivers have a moral duty not to reject elderly with hepatitis virus infection
- Caregivers practice standard precaution (such as hand hygiene and wearing gloves if you have to touch anyone's blood) when they care for the elderly with hepatitis virus infection
  - Get vaccines to protect themselves for hepatitis A & B

## Ways to Care for Elderly with Hepatitis Virus Infection –cont.

- Caregivers will advocate for elderly to obtain optimal care
  - **Encourage** to joining a hepatitis support group
  - If diabetic elderly routinely receive fingersticks, **remind** the elderly to bring their own testing equipment with them for their doctors visit
  - **Help** the elderly ask doctors the questions, such as the magnitude or severity of hepatitis disease, should they receive hepatitis treatment, and follow-up schedule, etc

Thank You

Questions





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## Reference

Hann, H.V., Han, S. H., Block, T.M., Harris, M., Maa, J.F., Fisher, R.T., & Atillasoy, E. (June 2008). Symptomatology and Health Attitudes of Chronic Hepatitis B Patient in the USA. *Journal Viral Hepatitis* 15(1) 42-51

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