

IMPORTANCE OF A COMPREHENSIVE AGE MANAGEMENT HEALTH EVALUATION

Today's physician should be able to evaluate and address patient disease risk markers for the distinct purpose of instituting proactive strategies for improvement of health and lowering of disease risk. The physician should use objective and subjective data points in order to reach conclusions and formulate a plan of treatment.

Age management as a concept is interested in improving patients' quality of life during the last half of life. The physician meets the patient at some point in adulthood, at which point disease risk is assessed and addressed.

Medical decisions are based on the scientific literature, standardized and repeatable markers, actuarial data, population data and individual patient risk factors.

A comprehensive history and adequate physical exam is carried out looking for signs and symptoms and physical findings consistent with low hormone states or high disease risk states.

It is also important to look for problems which would exclude certain "recipe book" therapies not appropriate for the individual. Laboratory and diagnostic testing must be carried out, a treatment plan must be created for the individual, and follow up must be done.

As an example, the most frequent cause of death in America is heart disease, killing almost one million men and women per year. A physician needs the knowledge and tools in order to lower disease risk in his or her patient and should be current on evidence based literature identifying specific markers of disease risk. Laboratory markers for cardiac risk include lipid values and C reactive protein. Many patients are unaware that insulin, glucose, and homocysteine levels play into the equation, as do behavioral parameters with metabolic sequelae including tobacco use, exercise, nutritional habits, and stress. Laboratory measurements such as waist to hip ratios and percentages of body fat vs. lean body mass are important.

Other important parameters which determine quality of life issues are mood, prostate and colon screening, and osteoporosis evaluation in both men and women over a certain age..

Many of these ideas are not exactly new or glamorous news, but the way in which they are evaluated and treated are.