



PhD in Biomedical Sciences

Research Area: Medicine (721)

Title: Gerontology and Gastroenterology: Study of the impact of aging in health and disease of the digestive system

Background: Society is witnessing an increase in life expectancy resulting in an aging population. As such, health providers require a reasonable background knowledge in essential geriatric medicine to cope with all problems of older patients. However, the current knowledge about this population is scarce since most clinical trials exclude elderly patients.

Objectives: This project aims to 1 improve knowledge regarding gastroenterology practice in elderly patients; 2. assess possible associations between aging, comorbidities, and polypharmacy; 3. characterize gastrointestinal transit in elderly patients; 4. compare aetiologies and outcomes regarding gastrointestinal bleeding in elderly *versus* younger patients; 5. compare aetiologies and outcomes regarding chronic liver disease in elderly *versus* younger patients.

Methodology: this project includes the following studies:

1. Gastrointestinal symptoms: differential aspects in the elderly (observational cross-sectional prospective study with control).
2. Gastrointestinal transit and constipation in the elderly (observational cross-sectional prospective study with control).
3. Polypharmacy and gastrointestinal symptoms in the elderly (observational cross-sectional prospective study).
4. Upper gastrointestinal bleeding: differential aspects in the elderly (observational cross-sectional retrospective and prospective multicentric study).
5. Chronic liver disease: differential aspects in the elderly (observational cross-sectional prospective study).

Conclusion: With these studies it is intended to contribute with further evidence regarding gastroenterology practice in elderly patients, a vulnerable yet prevalent population to maximize their quality of life.

Keywords: elderly; comorbidities; polypharmacy; constipation; chronic liver disease; gastrointestinal bleeding.

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