



Otorhinolaryngological Care in the Geriatric Population in Port Harcourt South-South Nigeria.

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ABSTRACT

Introduction: The elderly population include adults aged 65 years and above. Geriatric otorhinolaryngological care remains abysmal. There is paucity of information on pattern otorhinolaryngological disorders in our environment. The aim of this study is to document the ear, nose and throat disorders in our environment.

Method: A two year retrospective study of all patients aged 65 years and above who attended ear, nose and throat outpatient clinic in Rivers State University Teaching Hospital Port Harcourt. Age, Sex, presenting complain and diagnosis were analysed.

Result: There were more males with M:F 1.4:1. The commonest age group is 65-69 and least age group is 90 and above. The commonest presenting complain is reduced hearing while sensorineural hearing loss is commonest hearing loss.

Conclusion: There were more males in seen in this study, the commonest age group is between 65-69 years and sensorineural hearing loss is was commonest diagnosis.

INTRODUCTION:

The elderly population as defined by WHO includes all adults aged 65 years and above¹. A population of the elderly in Nigeria is about nine million^{2,3}. However medical care for the elderly has remained abysmal in most third world setting. There is paucity of information

on otorhinolaryngological conditions in the elderly in our environment.

Known otorhinolaryngological problems in the elderly includes hearing loss, vertigo, tinnitus, swallowing abnormalities, rhinosinusitis and head/neck tumors. However, hearing loss is the most prevalent otorhinolaryngological disorder in the elderly.

The aim of this study is to look at pattern of otorhinolaryngological problems as seen in the elderly in Port Harcourt, Southern Nigeria.

Proper understanding and documentation of pattern of otorhinolaryngological disorders in the elderly will help for proper planning and care for geriatric patients in our environment.

METHOD

It is a retrospective study of all patients aged 65 years and above who attended the ENT outpatient clinic of the Rivers State University Teaching Hospital between September 2018 – September 2020. The out patient register and patient case notes were accessed. Data retrieved includes patient's age, sex, presenting complains and diagnosis. Data was loaded into Microsoft excel spreadsheet and analyzed using SPSS Software.

RESULT

Table 1.

AGE (YEARS)	FREQUENCY (n)	PERCENTAGE %
65 – 69	252	50.0
70 – 74	156	31.1
75 – 79	60	11.9
80 – 84	18	3.6
85 – 89	12	2.4
90 & ABOVE	6	1.2
TOTAL	504	100

Table 2.

COMPLAINTS	FREQUENCY (n)
Hearing loss	294
Ear ache	12
Dizziness	30
Tinnitus	24
Swallowing disorders	48
Nasal discharge	12
Foreign body	6
Bleeding from the nose	6

Table 3.

DIAGNOSIS	FREQUENCY (n)
Sensorineural hearing loss	132
Carumauris	18
Chronic suppurative otitis media	5
Conductive hearing loss	42
Rhinosinusitis pharyngitis	12
Otitis externa	72
pharyngitis	30

DISCUSSION

In this study the prevalence of geriatric patients is 12.1 of the patients seen. This shows a significant improvement in otorhinolaryngological outpatient attendance when compared to previous study in the same environment⁴. This may be due to increased awareness of the availability of otorhinolaryngological services in our environment. However this is still lower than the prevalence reported in the developed world.

The age group 65 – 59 years had the highest attendance rate, this agrees with the work of previous researchers^{4, 5, 6}. Hearing loss is the most common disorder seen in this study. This agrees with the work of Ogunleye et al and Okhaku et al. however this differs from the findings of Onotai et al^{4,5}.

In conclusion, the geriatric patients in this study constituted 12.1% of the patients seen. The most affected age group with hearing loss is 65-69 years.

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