

COVID-19 and the Elderly: The Nursing Home Dilemma



Abstract

Introduction:

COVID-19: Coronavirus

Once an individual turns 65 years old, they are classified as elderly. The elderly population is often rejected, neglected, and abused. They have always faced physical and mental challenges, and now, there is even a more serious challenge they must face, COVID-19.

As COVID-19 spread in China, in December 2019, it was classified as an epidemic. Once it spread across several countries, by March 11, 2020, the WHO classified it as a pandemic. In the US, this disease has affected the elderly population the most. Adults 65 and older account for 16% of the US population but 80% of COVID-19 deaths in the US. This is somewhat higher than this population's share of deaths from all causes (75%) over the same period.

Underlying Medical Conditions/Comorbidities

A few of the underlying medical conditions that increase the risk of developing's severe COVID 19 disease: Cancer, Cardiac Disease, Chronic Renal Disease, COPD, Diabetes, High Blood Pressure, Weakened Immune System, and Sickle Cell. If there is a comorbidity, the presence of two or more medical conditions, an individuals' immune system is weakened even more so.

The COVID-19 situation among the elderly is dire. However, there is good news. It is now left in the hands of the healthcare professionals. As healthcare professionals, we have all the power to take the necessary actions, to protect society's most precious population. We have a duty; therefore, we must find a way to help the elderly overcome, control, and survive the COVID 19 pandemic. Are masks, proper hand washings, sanitizer, and social distancing, enough to control this pandemic among the elderly? We must find this out and act accordingly.

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Biography

Edwards is a medical professional with 40 plus years' experience in healthcare. She is a Registered Nurse, Medical Investigator, Legal Nurse Consultant, and an established published medical author. She holds an MHA degree, an MD degree, and completed post-doctoral fellowship training in researching and analyzing medical data, at the CDC in Atlanta Georgia.

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