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Emergency Medicine in Geriatrics – Are We Ready to Be on the Other Side?

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The increasing presence of elderly patients in emergency departments (EDs) presents unique challenges for healthcare systems worldwide. This presentation explores the complexities of geriatric emergency medicine, emphasizing the need for specialized multidisciplinary teams and specific training to address age-related vulnerabilities. Key challenges include biased medical evaluations, inadequate communication, and ER settings lacking proper adaptations.

Physiological changes associated with aging, such as diminished neurological, cardiovascular, respiratory, gastrointestinal, renal, and immune system functions, compound the risks in emergency care. Factors like polypharmacy, comorbidities, and conditions such as dementia, falls, and chronic pain further complicate clinical decisions. Additionally, the “progeriatric theory” highlights accelerated aging processes, leading to poorer quality of life.

To meet these challenges, the presentation advocates for a shift in emergency care strategies, integrating tailored approaches that enhance diagnosis, treatment, and quality of care for the geriatric population.