

Is there a Connection with Alzheimer's, Fall, Hip Fractures and Anesthesia?

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Commentary

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The answer is yes, according to the article published in the Neuroscience News, February 26th, 2019. In this study researchers found a correlation between the Alzheimer's disease in spinal fluid in a significant number of older patients who were hospitalized secondary to hip fractures. A hypothesis surfaced asking "what were the signs or symptoms or a type of bio-markers that connected falls to the presence of Alzheimer's in those patients?". The study identified falls being the first sign of Alzheimer's in older adults. Scientists believe that poor balance leads to falls and falls lead to hip fractures with the fall serving as an alert of a possible diagnosis of Alzheimer's disease. In this study the researchers did not mention anesthesia or how that impacts hip surgery in older adults or whether the condition was temporary such as an impairment known as postoperative cognitive decline which only last a few weeks.

Let's consider just one type of dementia, Lewy Body Dementia. This type of the dementia has a high incidence of falls, particularly in those patients diagnosed with Parkinson's with Lewy Bodies. In these patients, gait is usually impaired in conjunction with low levels of Levadopa. These patients are then prescribed a medication called Levadopa. Levadopa's side effects such as drowsiness and dizziness potentiate the risk for falls. In June 2013, the Lewy Body Society of UK publication in the Parkinson's UK published a fall fact sheet. The impaired gait often is present in patients who are diagnosed with LBD who in addition may have Parkinson's disease. It is in these patients that the incidence of falls is higher. The Johns Hopkins researchers studied older adults with no clinical diagnosis or signs of dementia at the time of hospitalization post hip fracture. The researchers collected samples of spinal fluid from the older adults and added that the results of study furthered the evidence that the alterations in the brain lead to poor balance in older patients thereby culminating in the conclusion that a fall resulting in a hip fracture is in truth the signaling of a monstrous medical reality, Alzheimer's or Lewy Body Dementia. The realization that the disease processes were brewing within the cells of the brain even before the intravenous line was started for purposes of anesthesia. This would make any human being shiver in fear and dread when such a horrific disease was not at all in the periphery of the patient or the patient's family before the fall or the hip surgery.

In an article "Can General Anesthesia Trigger Dementia?" scientist attempt to identify the relationship between temporary and permanent cognitive impairment and dementia. In an effort to investigate what this relationship is, researches study animals and human cells. In recent experiments animal and human cells show that anesthesia used in high doses may increase the build-up of the proteins thought to underlie Alzheimer's disease. Anyone reading this article may agree with me that this is a cruel way to find out the true condition or root cause of the frequent falls. Here the phrase "hitting a person while they are down", literally takes on a new meaning. Life surely has its ups and downs but we hope we never experience them in such a way.