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Dementia-related agitation: A review of non-drug interventions and analysis of risks and benefits of drug therapy

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Unsurprisingly, the subject of dementia has been a rising matter of public health concerns as people now live longer. World Alzheimer Report 2015, estimate that about 46.8 million people worldwide have dementia. These numbers are projected to almost double every 20 years, reaching 74.7 million in 2030 and 131.5 million in 2050. The modality for treating agitation and other behavioral symptoms in dementia patients has been a challenge. Many years on, there has been no FDA-approved drug therapy in treating dementia-related agitation. This review discusses the current knowledge of non-drug interventions and analyzes the risks and benefits of drug therapy in the management of dementia-related agitation, as well as providing an anecdotal of the author's clinical experience. This article aims to provide opportunity for increase awareness for clinicians; particularly those with no specialty training in elderly care medicine, but, see dementia patients with agitation and other behavioral symptoms from time to time. Likewise, it hopefully will benefit the readers of medical journals to update their existing knowledge on matters relating to the management of dementia-related agitation.

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