CLINICAL PROFILES OF ACUTE MYOCARDIAL INFARCTION IN ELDERLY CHINESE

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Introduction
Acute myocardial infarction (AMI) is a serious cardiac disease, causing significant morbidity and mortality in elderly population. Better understanding of the clinical profile of patients of AMI may improve the management of the disease.

Methodology
We conducted a 5-year prospective study, looking into the clinical characteristics of the elderly AMI patients. From April 1991 to March 1996, all AMI patients of age greater than 75 were recruited. Their demographic characteristics, coronary risk factors, clinical presentation, treatment and complications were recorded into an AMI registry form.

Results
Over the 5 years, there were 132 elderly AMI patients (62 men, 70 women, mean age 81). 51.5% were smokers, 36.4% had hypertension, 10.6% had diabetes mellitus and 2.2% had previous AMI. 83.3% presented with chest pain, 11.4% with syncope, and 8.3% with dyspnea. 87.9% of them presented to hospitals within 12 hours of onset of symptoms, 42.2% of them were given thrombolytic therapy (TT). Complications (mostly minor bleeding) occurred in 14.3% of those patients receiving TT. As for in-hospital complications, 37.9% had heart failure, 36.4% had arrhythmia, 31.8% had cardiogenic shock and 22% had post-AMI angina. Their median length of stay in CCU was 3 days and that of hospital stay was 8 days.

Conclusion
By recognizing these clinical profiles, better management plan and strategy may be chosen by the geriatricians and cardiologists for these elderly AMI patients.