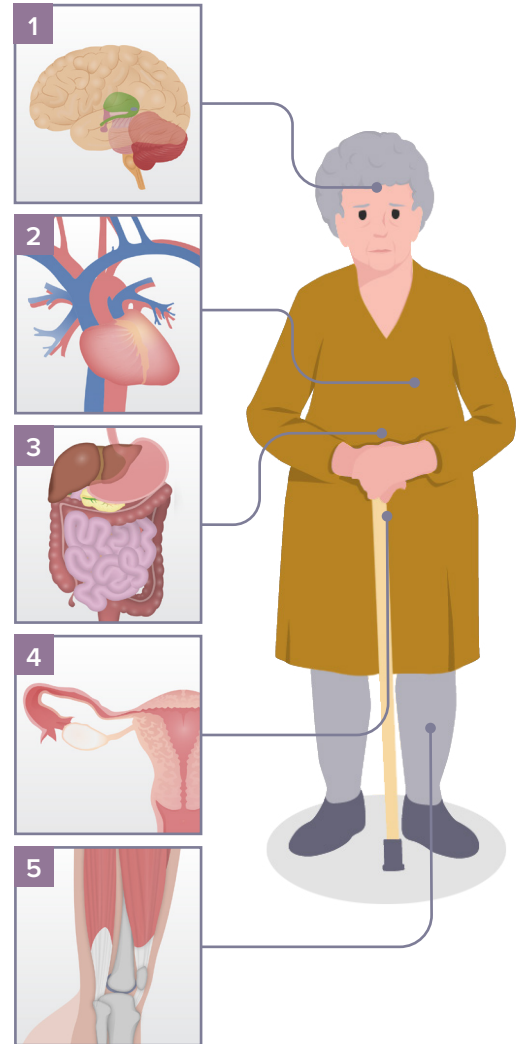


COMMON CONCERNS OF GERIATRIC CLIENTS



Aging is the normal process of cellular, metabolic, and functional changes occurring in the body over time. These changes can predispose older individuals to disease. Genetic factors, lifestyle, and environment contribute to wide variation in the health and functional status of the geriatric population. It is important to distinguish normal age-related changes from signs of disease.

Normal Age-related Changes	Age-related Disease
<p>1 Brain: Overall decrease in size; changes in neurotransmitter and hormone levels. Minor changes in memory, mental operations, and multitasking ability do not impair independent functioning.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dementia • Alzheimer's disease • Parkinson's disease • Stroke • Depression
<p>2 Cardiovascular system: Stiffening of blood vessels requires heart to pump harder, leading to changes in heart muscle. Inability to increase heart rate rapidly in response to activity.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • High blood pressure • Atherosclerosis • Heart failure • Arrhythmias • Myocardial infarction
<p>3 Gastrointestinal system: Changes in hormone levels can decrease appetite. Changes in smooth muscle motility can lead to constipation.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dysphagia • GERD • Ulcers • Diverticular disease • GI bleed • Cancer
<p>4 Urinary system: Decreased number of functional glomeruli. Decreased elasticity of bladder. Increased prostate size, incomplete bladder emptying and less forceful urine stream.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Urinary incontinence • Urinary tract infections • Chronic kidney disease • Prostatitis • Benign prostatic hyperplasia • Prostate cancer
<p>5 Musculoskeletal system: Bones shrink in size and density. Muscles lose strength, endurance, and flexibility. Reduced coordination, stability, and balance.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Arthritis • Osteoporosis • Fall-related injuries • Bone fractures



Health Promotion Strategies		Nursing Considerations
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Daily physical activity • Well-balanced diet • Adequate hydration • Sleep hygiene • Maintain healthy weight • Avoid smoking • Avoid alcohol/substance use 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stay mentally active with reading, games, ongoing learning • Seek social interaction to reduce stress, depression and memory loss • Attend routine health check ups and screenings 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nonjudgmental listening • Normalize age-related changes • Provide anticipatory guidance • Investigate signs of disease • Be aware of effects of isolation, loss, and grief

NOTES

