Geriatric consultation: A specialty to care for the elderly

do and what I have to offer. Saying simply that I specialize in medical care for the elderly does not tell the whole story. Geriatrics is a relatively new specialty. It was only in the 1980s that the first formal fellowship in Geriatrics began. The American Board of Internal Medicine recognized Geriatrics as a subspecialty in 2006.



Margarita Reyes, M.D.

HEALTHY There are many changes that occur

as part of the normal aging process and it is my specialty to distinguish normal process of aging from disease.

Unique Population

It is difficult to identify a specific age that defines the Geriatric population. I am sure we have all met 90-year-olds who seem much "younger" than some many changes that occur as part als that specifically exclude the and oncologists to provide care right for you.

Since coming in to the com- 50-year-olds. So although many of the normal aging process and elderly, so those guidelines usumunity, I have been asked by both use the age of 65 for this definition it is my specialty to distinguish ally do not apply. Geriatrics is lay people and those working in tion, it may be younger depending normal process of aging from a specialty which is not organ-

> impairment occurs in the kidneys with aging, but it is certainly not automatic that all of the elderly have kidney failure.

Complexivists

Geriatricians have frequently been called Complexivists" because we care for patients who are frail,

Much like in the Pediatric popu- high risk, and have multiple and lation, the same medications and complex diseases. What makes diagnostic tests that we use for our decision-making process the regular "adult population" do more challenging is that most not automatically apply to the guidelines used by physicians are Geriatric population. There are based on research studies or tri-

the medical field about what I upon the issues being addressed. disease. As an example, it may be specific such as those that focus expected that some only on the brain, the heart or the lungs might be. Rather Geriatrics crosses all organ systems.

Some of the syndromes that are more commonly encountered in the elderly include dementia, delirium, falls, incontinence, use of many medications at the same time and adverse drug events. A comprehensive geriatric assessment pays special attention to those issues, as well as functional status, goals of care, and quality

The Geriatric Consultation

I work in partnership with each patient's primary care physicians, hospitalists, surgeons, tion with a geriatrician would be

for the elderly patient that is individualized and goal-directed. My focus is on maintaining functional status, independence, and quality of life. As a geriatrician, I practice in many settings including my office practice, the hospital, skilled nursing facilities, assisted living facilities, and patients' homes for those who are home bound.

Margarita Reyes, M.D., is a member of the medical staff of the Bristol Hospital Multi-Specialty Group, Inc, and its new Geriatric Medicine Program. Dr Reyes' office will be located at 85 Beleden Gardens Drive in Bristol and she specializes in geriatric medicine. Dr. Reyes is accepting new patients for consultation and can be reached at 860.845.5901. Please ask your primary care physician if consulta-

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