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SOMPOL SIRIRUTTANAPRUK : DRUG-RELATED HOSPITAL
ADMISSIONS IN ELDERLY PATIENTS OF MEDICAL WARD AT
RAMATHIBODI HOSPITAL. THESIS ADVISORS : BUSBA CHINDAVIJAK,
Ph.D., SIRINTORN CHANSIRIKARNJANA, M.D. 96 P. ISBN 974-662-917-4

Polypharmacy is common in elderly patients. Accordingly, elderly patients are at risk of adverse drug reaction, drug noncompliance, and finally hospital admission. Whether the cause of hospital admissions of elderly patients at Ramathibodi Hospital is related to drugs or not has never been elucidated. The purpose of this study was to determine the incidence of adverse drug reactions and drug noncompliance and their causes, and whether these were related to hospital admissions. The study was conducted by review of daily medical records followed by interviewing patients or their caregivers. Three hundred and thirty one patients (151 men and 180 women) admitted to two medical wards during 1st August 1998 and 31st December 1998 were included in the study. Their mean \pm S.D. age was 70.4 ± 7.8 years. Seventy three percent of them took an average number of 4.4 prescribed drugs per patient. The incidence of drug-related hospital admissions was 18.1%. Of these, 11.2% were related to adverse drug reactions and 6.9% were related to drug noncompliance. Side effects was the major type of adverse drug reaction found in the study. These included hyponatremia, gastrointestinal bleeding, and severe cough. Drugs identified to be the causes were diuretics, non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs, and angiotensin converting enzyme inhibitors. Underuse of drugs was the major type of drug noncompliance detected during the patient interview. The most commonly stated reason of noncompliance was misunderstanding leading to stop taking drugs. Drugs commonly implicated in noncompliance-related admission were those used for cardiovascular disorders.

It is concluded that adverse drug reaction and drug noncompliance-related admissions could be minimized by prescribing drug and dosage regimen that are individualized, and providing counseling to patients that emphasizes the importance of drug adherence.