

# Gerryatric Musings

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## Medications

I would like to make you aware of a recent article in Geriatrics Journal, authored by Michelle Hart and Pauline Giancroce from the University of Toronto. The article: “Safer Prescribing in Elderly Patients” is an excellent review of the pharmacokinetic changes that occur with aging and the pitfalls in prescribing for the elderly.

[http://canadiangeriatrics.ca/default/assets/File/CJG-CME%20Vol14-2%20Hart\(2\).pdf](http://canadiangeriatrics.ca/default/assets/File/CJG-CME%20Vol14-2%20Hart(2).pdf)

There is a template for medication reviews that I would like to highlight here:

Medication Appropriateness Index:

Questions to ask about each individual medication the patient take:

- 1) Is there an indication for the medication?
- 2) Is the medication effective for the condition?
- 3) Are the directions correct?
- 4) Are the directions practical?
- 5) Are there clinically significant drug-drug interactions?
- 6) Are there clinically significant drug-disease/condition interactions?
- 7) Is there unnecessary duplication with other medication(s)?
- 8) Is the duration of therapy acceptable?
- 9) Is this medication the least expensive alternative compare to others of equal utility?

(This was taken from: Holmes HM, Cox Hayley D, et al. Reconsidering medication appropriateness for patients late in life. Arch Intern Med 2006;166:605–9. )

The article highlights the vicious cycle of treating new symptoms as a new disease or problem. Patients with new symptoms require a review of their medications for adverse effects before any new treatment is initiated.