

5 Minute Flashcards

Card 8: Frailty

What is frailty?
And what are the
signs of frailty?

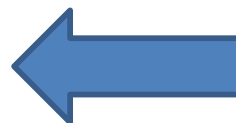


True or false?

1. If you're over 65, you're frail
2. If you're under 65, you're not frail



What can the
theatre team do to
improve outcomes
in frail patients?



What perioperative complications are
more common in patients with frailty?

Card 8: Frailty

Frailty is “A multidomain decline in physiological reserve and function resulting in an increased vulnerability to stressors.”

Some geriatricians use a paper-boat analogy... it still floats while the water is calm, but it wouldn't take much to capsize it.

Signs of frailty include weight loss, reduced strength and energy, reduced physical activity and falls.

It is associated with older age, dementia, low mood, comorbidities, sensory impairment and social isolation.



Both false: younger patients can be frail, and older patients might not be. But frailty should be considered in all patients >65 and those <65 with risk factors.



- At WHO brief: discuss the presence frailty
- Consider list order to avoid long starvation times/ allow meds to be given on time
- Ensure senior surgical and anaesthetic input, especially for emergency cases
- Consider having carer/ relative in anaesthetic room if sensory/ cognitive impairment
- Avoid unnecessary catheters. When one is required, get it out asap!
- Move & position carefully... consider lifting rather than sliding, use gel supports etc.
- Keep temperature normal and BP within 20% baseline. Consider depth of anaesthesia monitors and use regional anaesthesia where possible
- At WHO sign out: consider level of care and aim to normalise asap... how soon can they eat and drink, when can lines come out?
- Get dentures/ hearing aids/ glasses back to the patient asap

Most! Delirium, falls, delayed recovery, pressure sores, and mortality are all higher.

