

**An Examination of Further Measures to Deal with Anxiety Disorders in the Elderly:  
A review of the Literature indicated the Importance of such Measures in Japan**

The Editor,

Sir,

Around the world, numerous studies have examined the issue of whether measures to prevent anxiety disorders in the elderly continue to be needed (1, 2). The issue of whether such measures continue to be needed in Japan must be examined. This report focussed on and reviewed the literature on anxiety disorders in the elderly cited primarily in Japan.

One report (3) stated that numerous studies found that anxiety disorders in old age involved mostly an increased incidence of generalized anxiety disorder (GAD) and phobias and decreased incidence of panic disorder (PD). The report (3) also indicated that the psychiatric disorder most often occurring with anxiety disorders in old age was a depressive disorder. A report (4) stated that a GAD was the most prevalent of anxiety disorders of the elderly, that a GAD was often accompanied by depression, that a GAD often presented with physical symptoms, and that a GAD was associated with complication of a physical condition. The report (4) indicated the importance of detecting and dealing with a GAD early on. A report (5) indicated that major predisposing factors for anxiety disorders were being 'female', having a 'low socio-economic level', having a 'family history', and 'external control', and other significantly related factors included the 'current level of stress', 'shrinking of interpersonal networks' and 'loneliness'. A report has indicated that various aspects, *ie* biological, psychological and social, affect anxiety disorders in the elderly (6). A report stated that anxiety and depression went unnoticed in the elderly and it described the need for closer attention since opportunities for appropriate treatment might slip by (7).

Understanding the various aspects of anxiety disorders in the elderly is crucial, as is early detection and treatment.

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