

Evaluating and Managing Falls and Incontinence: Case Study

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Mrs. B. is a 78 year old woman in your practice with congestive heart failure, osteoarthritis, atrial fibrillation, and hypertension. She comes in with a bruised knee sustained during a fall in her home. She sustained no other injuries. She says that the fall occurred when she got up at 2AM to go to the bathroom.

PMH: as above, EF 28% with global hypokinesis, AF for two years with failed cardioversion, rate controlled by beta blockers

Meds: Enalapril 10mg QD, celebrex 100mg BID, coumadin 4mg QD, furosemide 40mg BID, restoril 15mg HS and atenolol 25mg QD.

ROS: No headaches or neuro changes. Notes slight increase in edema and shortness of breath for past month. Increased OA pain in her knees for past few months,. Increased urinary urgency over past few years, now with accidents 1-2 times a week, has nocturia 1-2 times a night for the past month or so.

Physical Examination:

In general: Slightly obese, does not look acutely ill

BP 150/90 with no orthostatic changes P64 R18

Lungs Bibasilar rales

CV Irregular, murmur consistent with aortic sclerosis

Abd Nontender

Extr 1+ edema, ecchymoses over right knee, no effusion or deformity

Neuro Alert and oriented

MMSE 26/30 (missed 3 serial 7's and 1/3 objects)

Gait Difficulty with sitting to standing

Steps slightly short and hesitant, slightly wide based

Balance fairly normal, but sways with eyes closed

Pelvic examination

Absolutely normal

PVR 5 cc

Normal pad test

Labs (others upon request)

CBC normal, Na 140 K 4.9, BUN 32, Cr 1.1, INR 2.2

UA normal

Questions:

1. How do you evaluate new onset incontinence?
2. What factors might be contributing to worsening incontinence in her?
3. What interventions might help her incontinence? What evidence is there to support those interventions?
4. What factors might contribute to an increased risk for falls in her?
5. What else do you want to know about her risks for injury due to falls?
6. What interventions have been shown in randomized controlled trials to reduce falls and/or injuries due to falls?
7. Do you need to stop her coumadin?