

Feeding Difficulty in Older Adults with Dementia

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摘要

Abstract

AIMS AND OBJECTIVES: To use concept analysis to identify characteristics of feeding difficulty and its antecedents and consequences that provide direction for assessment and management. **BACKGROUND:** Feeding difficulty is often recognised as a common problem for older adults and is associated with weight loss, poor nutrition and risk for aspiration pneumonia. The cognitive impairment found in persons with dementia impairs the ability of these adults to complete motor and perceptual tasks required for eating and often prevent the older adult from accepting help with feeding from caregivers. **DESIGN:** Systematic review. **METHODS:** In 2006, literature searches using keywords (feeding, eating, nutrition, malnutrition, feeding assessment, dementia, ageing and concept analysis, dementia and feeding and excluding enteral feeding, tube feedings, PEG and enteral nutrition) were done in Medline, CINHALL, AGELINE and Social Science Full Text. Seventy relevant articles in English were found. After a review of the relevant articles, concept analysis was used to develop a definition of feeding difficulty, its defining characteristics and to delineate feeding difficulty from its antecedents and consequences. **RESULTS:** Feeding difficulties arise at the interface between the caregiver strategies to assist the older adult with getting food into the mouth and chewing and swallowing food. A model of feeding difficulty delineates the antecedents and consequences of feeding difficulties. **CONCLUSIONS:** The conceptual model of feeding difficulties provides a strong and clear organising structure for research that can be used to developed evidence based guidelines for practice. **RELEVANCE TO CLINICAL PRACTICE:** The conceptual model provides directions for assessment of feeding difficulties and their antecedents. The model can be used to identify interventions that address antecedents of feeding difficulty (risk factors) and different types of feeding difficulties.