

Chronic Disease Management 2024

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SFP2024; 50(2)

In Singapore, the proportion of older adults with three or more chronic diseases nearly doubled from 2009 (19.8 percent) to 2017 (37.0 percent).¹ According to the Global Burden of Disease Study 2019, there has been a significant shift towards an increased proportion of burden due to years of healthy life lost to disability (YLD) from chronic diseases.² Additionally, chronic diseases also lead to decreased quality of life, increased medical expenditure, and greater government healthcare spending.³ This issue will provide an update on the latest evidence-based treatment options in chronic disease management.

In Unit 1, A/Prof Goh Lee Gan gives an update on proteinuria and hypertension with and without type 2 diabetes mellitus. Four areas were reviewed, namely: a) blood pressure definition and classification; b) diagnosis of hypertension; c) hypertension and proteinuria in non-diabetic patients; and d) proteinuria and hypertension in diabetic patients.

In Unit 2, Drs Tan Seng Kiong, Tan Hwee Huan, and A/Prof Sum Chee Fang write about the challenges of initiating insulin therapy in the primary care setting and how to overcome these obstacles by sharing clinical pointers and strategies to aid primary care doctors in preparing their practices for patients who require insulin therapy.

In Unit 3, Dr Tham Kwang Wei writes about biology of weight regulation and pathophysiology of obesity. She also highlights dietary approaches as part of a multi-pronged approach in the treatment of obesity and shares a brief update on intermittent fasting.

In Unit 4, A/Prof Richard Lee and Dr Anita Lim write about the initiation of urate lowering therapy (ULT) in the management of gout, covering areas such as when to initiate, how to initiate, treatment targets, and how to treat acute gout flares.

In Unit 5, Dr Desmond Wai discusses how to assess and manage non-alcoholic fatty liver disease (NAFLD). He provides clinical pointers for the management of NAFLD in the primary care clinic.

In Unit 6, Dr Rohit Khurana writes about the assessment and shared care management of heart failure with normal and reduced ejection fraction. He also touches upon novel treatment options in heart failure with reduced ejection fraction.

In this issue, A/Prof Goh Lee Gan has also selected ten current readings on topics related to Chronic Disease Management in 2024. These readings include articles about managing hypertension, diabetes, gout, and NAFLD.

REFERENCES

1. Choo F. Over-60s suffering more with chronic diseases than a decade ago: Study. Singapore: The Straits Times. 2019 May 7.
2. Vos T, Lim SS, Abbafati C, et al. Global burden of 369 diseases and injuries in 204 countries and territories, 1990–2019: a systematic analysis for the Global Burden of Disease Study 2019. *The Lancet*. 2020 Oct 17;396(10258):1204-22.
3. Murray CJ, Barber RM, Foreman KJ, et al. Global, regional, and national disability-adjusted life years (DALYs) for 306 diseases and injuries and healthy life expectancy (HALE) for 188 countries, 1990–2013: quantifying the epidemiological transition. *The Lancet*. 2015 Nov 28;386(10009):2145-91.