

Coexisting Conditions in PD

Physicians who are aware of coexisting conditions in PD patients can provide better care, according to Mark Guttman, MD, FRCPC, of the University of Toronto, Canada. This is true regardless of whether the coexisting conditions are actually linked to PD, or simply happen to be present in the PD population. Analyzing the normalized ratio of hospital admissions, Dr. Guttman found that the PD population had substantially higher admissions than in the non-PD population for the following potentially life-threatening conditions: food and vomit pneumonitis (6.3-fold increased risk), volume depletion (2.9), urinary tract infections (2.9) septicemia (2.7), psychosis (2.6), hip fractures (2.6), constipation (2.6), pneumonia (2.2), and intestinal obstruction (1.4). Preventive measures, such as speech therapy for swallowing problems, a watchful eye, and aggressive management may reduce hospitalizations and improve morbidity and mortality rates in patients with PD. Dr. Guttman said that these conditions may be a factor in the higher mortality rate seen in PD.