

# Caregivers' Cove

Frailty in the elderly is a universal challenge with our ageing population. The concern becomes prominent with Covid-19 pandemic measures restricting activities outside homes.

## What about Frailty?<sup>1</sup>

- It increases falls risk, disability, immobility, hospitalizations and caregiver burden.
- About 4 in 10 elderly aged 65 have pre-frail symptoms. More are affected as age increases.
- The good news: frailty is preventable and reversible!

## Causes of Frailty<sup>1</sup>

- **Malnutrition** due to poor diet, swallowing or digestion problems.
- **Medical conditions**, e.g. unchecked hypothyroidism, anaemia, chronic conditions, cancer, asthma, stroke, heart, kidney diseases.
- **Mental conditions**, e.g. cognitive impairment or depression.

## Preventing/Reversing Frailty<sup>2</sup>

Caregivers hold a key role in managing frailty in seniors:

- **Nutrition:** explain its importance, offer balanced meals and/or nutritional supplements.
- **Psychosocial:** provide emotional support and pleasant companionship.
- **Medical:** get hearing or vision problems corrected, investigate unexpected weight losses.
- **Mental:** play games or share interesting activities.
- **Exercise:** Get moving with seniors for aerobic, strength, balance and coordination benefits, e.g. take walks, learn Taiji, play Wii games, etc.



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Building Stronger Communities, *Together*

1. "Approach to frailty in the elderly in primary care and the community", Singapore Med J. Singapore Med J 2018; 59(5): 240-245, <http://www.smj.org.sg/article/approach-frailty-elderly-primary-care-and-community>, 7 Sep 2020  
 2. "Delaying and reversing frailty: a systematic review of primary care interventions", 2019; 69 (678): e61-e69, <https://bjgp.org/content/69/678/e61#:~:text=Conclusion%20A%20combination%20of%20muscle,inform%20choices%20for%20managing%20frailty>, 7 Sep 2020

# 看护者港湾

人口老化和平均寿命延长使长者衰弱成为国际性关注的问题<sup>1</sup>。冠状疫情期间外出活动减少使问题更显著。

## 衰弱问题<sup>1</sup>

- 增加跌倒风险、身体障碍、行动不便、住院和看护者负担。
- 10位65岁以上长者大约4位有衰弱前期的症状。随着年龄增加更多长者受衰弱问题影响。
- 好消息：衰弱是可以预防和恢复的！

## 衰弱的导因<sup>1</sup>

- **营养不良**：饮食、吞咽或消化问题导致。
- **医药问题**，如：甲状腺功能低下、贫血、长期疾病、癌症、哮喘、中风、心脏和肾病。
- **精神疾病**：认知智障、忧郁症。

## 预防/恢复衰弱问题<sup>2</sup>

看护者在预防/恢复衰弱问题上扮演着重要角色：

- **营养**：分享知识、提供营养均衡的餐食或补充品。
- **心理**：提供精神支持和愉快陪伴。
- **医药**：追究不明体重减轻的原因，矫正视觉或听觉问题，
- **脑力**：和长者玩游戏或一起做有趣的事。
- **运动**：和长者一起做有氧、肌力、平衡和协调身体的活动，如：步行、打太极、玩 Wii 电子游戏等。



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**filos**

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