

# Shared medical appointments beneficial in geriatric care

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(HealthDay)—For older patients, a shared medical appointment (SMA) program facilitates early detection and referral for geriatric syndromes, according to an article published online Nov. 29 in the *Journal of the American Geriatrics Society*.

Noting that screening for geriatric conditions is not consistently performed in primary care settings, Suepattra G. May, Ph.D., M.P.H., from the Palo Alto Medical Foundation in California, and colleagues examined an SMA program. The goals were to improve early identification of at-risk individuals; ensure appropriate follow-up; facilitate discussion about prevention, diagnosis, and treatment of conditions; use strategies to reduce the risks of these conditions; and increase access to screening and preventive health services. One hundred

thirty-six individuals aged 60 years and older participated in the program between August 2011 and May 2013.

The researchers found that based on preliminary data, SMAs seem to be effective, facilitating early detection and referral for geriatric syndromes. SMAs provided the opportunity for more thorough discussion about several geriatric syndromes than that offered in Medicare Wellness visits and 20-minute geriatric visits. In addition, psychosocial concerns were addressed through the group interaction and peer support of an SMA.

"The findings highlight the potential for SMAs to meaningfully provide education, [peer support](#), and interventions for aging participants," the authors write.

**More information:** [Abstract](#)  
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