

# Frailty: The rising global health burden for an aging society

October 15 2019

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Despite the evidence on risk factors for frailty, and the substantial progress that has been made in frailty awareness, the biological mechanisms underlying its development are still far from understood and translation from research to clinical practice remains a challenge, according to a new series on Frailty just published by *The Lancet*.

Linda P. Fried, MD, MPH, dean of Columbia University Mailman School of Public Health and DeLamar Professor of Public Health Practice, and Professor of Epidemiology and Medicine, was part of an

international group of experts who contributed to the series of papers which provide an up-to-date clinical overview on preventing, identifying and managing frailty as well as its global impact and burden. The series also offers evidence-based interventions for individuals with frailty. The findings are published online.

In the paper on Clinical Practice and Public Health, Fried, a renowned gerontologist and expert on aging, highlights two emerging lines of life course evidence on frailty. First, Fried and colleagues make the point that the risk of adverse outcomes can be predicted. Secondly, there is a clinical syndrome of frailty which is an outcome of biologic aging, although risk levels are substantially higher among those with certain diagnoses and comorbidities. She also notes that while great strides have been made in understanding frailty in the past two decades, many gaps in knowledge remain: no universal consensus exists on the definition of frailty or its assessment, and more robust, high-quality trials of strategies to prevent and manage frailty are needed.

**More information:** Emiel O Hoogendijk et al, Frailty: implications for clinical practice and public health, *The Lancet* (2019). [DOI: 10.1016/S0140-6736\(19\)31786-6](https://doi.org/10.1016/S0140-6736(19)31786-6)

Provided by Columbia University's Mailman School of Public Health

Citation: Frailty: The rising global health burden for an aging society (2019, October 15) retrieved 1 May 2024 from <https://medicalxpress.com/news/2019-10-frailty-global-health-burden-aging.html>

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