Important signs of blood clots in the lungs missed in patients with dementia

21 September 2021

The researchers studied 593,000 emergency department visits to 104 Veterans Affairs hospitals between 2011 and 2018. The sample included 7100 physicians. Patients were age 60 and older and presented with shortness of breath.

The researchers note that the study was observational and there may have been other, non-observable factors that contributed to these results. The data also did not include care wishes of patients or their caregivers, and the results may be specific to VA patients and physicians and not applicable to non-VA populations.

Physicians may miss factors associated with pulmonary embolisms, or fail to use these factors in making medical decisions, in patients who have dementia. An understanding of how physicians evaluate and make decisions in these circumstances may lead to improved care for patients with dementia.

The study is published in the peer reviewed Journal of the American Geriatrics Society.


Provided by University of California, Los Angeles