

## Surprised to be alive! Aging with HIV

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## Objectives

- ▶ By the end of the session, participants will be able to:
  - Describe the HIV epidemic among persons 50 years of age and older
  - Discuss issues and concerns of HIV+ persons 50 years of age and older
  - Verbalize the role of the nurse in promoting physical, mental, and emotional health among persons living with HIV 50 years of age and older

## The HIV Epidemic

- ▶ Antiretroviral therapy has transitioned HIV from a death sentence to a chronic illness
- ▶ Currently CDC estimates that more than 165,000 HIV positive individuals living in the United States are 50 years of age or older
  - Of these, 22% represent new infections
  - Men who have sex with men are most severely affected
- ▶ By 2015, 50% of persons living with HIV will be over the age of 50

## The HIV Epidemic (cont.)

- ▶ With proper treatment, HIV positive individuals can live a long and productive life
  - Persons aging with HIV must be prepared to address the co-morbidities that occur with aging
    - Diabetes
    - Bone disease
    - Hypercholesterolemia
    - Cardiovascular disease
    - Cancer
    - Renal problems
    - Osteoporosis
    - Low Testosterone
    - Frailty

## Purpose

To identify the educational needs of persons 50 years of age and older living with HIV

## Methods/Practice Qualitative Study

- ▶ AIDS Service Organizations assisted with recruiting participants
- ▶ Six focus groups
  - 49 participants
    - 34 men
    - 15 women
  - Groups based on gender, ethnicity, and sexual orientation
    - 74% Black, 22% White, 4% other
    - 40% heterosexual, 44% gay, 8% bi-sexual, 8% unsure
  - Participant incentive: \$30

## Methods/Practice (cont.)

- ▶ Questions related to educational needs of older adults aging with HIV were asked
- ▶ Sessions audio recorded and transcribed verbatim
- ▶ Thematic content analysis was used to explore responses

## Findings/Conclusion

- ▶ Six themes related to educational needs of older adults aging with HIV were identified:
- ▶ Five of the six themes were common among men and women:
  - "Surprised to be alive."
  - "Intimacy wanted, not just sex."
  - "Is this HIV or am I just getting old?"
  - "Avoiding isolation and stigma."
  - "Life is more than just my physical health."

## Findings/Conclusion (cont.)

- ▶ The theme specific to women was:
  - “Life is a balancing act.”
- ▶ A finding not reflected in the themes:
  - Energy and enthusiasm of participants
- ▶ Overall, findings are reflective of older adults in general

## Development of An Education Intervention

- ▶ Findings were used to develop an 8-week education intervention for persons living with HIV. Health topics included:
  - Aging
  - Physical Activity and Bone Health
  - Nutrition
  - Diabetes
  - Cardiovascular Disease
  - Mental Health/Cognition
  - Healthy Relationships
  - Health Promotion

## Validation of Intervention

- ▶ Focus Group, 5 HIV positive males
  - 50 years of age and older
  - Years living with HIV >15 years
- ▶ Reviewed the following:
  - Time frame of the intervention, compensation and topics covered
  - Pre and post assessment instruments

## Intervention (cont.)

- ▶ Instruments
  - Demographic profile
  - SF-36 (physical and mental health)
  - Frailty Phenotype
  - Center for Epidemiology Studies Depression Scale
  - Test of Functional Health Literacy
  - Self-Efficacy for Managing Chronic Disease
  - Expectations of Aging
  - Multidimensional Quality of Life
  - Physical assessment—cholesterol, bone density, hemoglobin, glucose, BMI, blood pressure, CD4 count and viral load

## Benefits to Participants

- ▶ Personal goal setting through journaling
- ▶ Tracking of personal behaviors, use of pedometers and diet diaries
- ▶ Improved self-efficacy and quality of life
- ▶ Potential for changes in perceptions of aging
- ▶ Prevention and delayed onset of chronic disease
- ▶ Potential for improved relationships

## Implications for Practice

- ▶ Nurses need to:
  - Be more proactive in discussing expectations of aging
  - Assess for healthy life-style behaviors: physical activity, diet, etc.
  - Encourage patients/clients to adopt healthy life-style behaviors
  - Heighten their awareness of the incidence of frailty among adults aging with HIV

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