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Title: COPD in elders (>80y.): Smoking and air pollution

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Body: We studied a group of Elders living in a Nursing home and affected by COPD. The diagnosis has been made in all of them five or more years ago. 63 Elders affected by COPD have been found among 282 (>80 y.) admitted into our geriatric nursing home: 22,3% of the total number. COPD has been associated to heart diseases (54%), cerebrovascular diseases (46%) and moderate or severe dementia (45%). Concerning the Gender 17 are men and 46 women. For the age 18 are between 80/84 y., 25 between 85/89 y. and 20 over 90y. Ex smokers (22): 6 m. and 3 w. in the first group, 5 m. and 5 w. in the second, 1 m. and 2 w. in the third. No smokers (41): 1 m. and 8 w. in the first, 2 m. and 13 w. in the second, 2 m. and 15 w. in the third. No differences have been found between ex smokers and no smokers about the numbers of exacerbations of COPD and the supplement of oxygen in the last year. The drug more used has been Tiotropium (more than half of elders) while only in few cases Beta2 long-acting and inhaled corticosteroids. Unfortunately in ten women, no-smokers, it has been impossible to check their exposition to passive-smoke. Conclusion: in women no smokers, without occupational exposures, ambient air pollution is a probable risk factor for the development of COPD. In our elders the evolution has been rather slow but has required continual treatment and has worsened their quality of life. We thank dr. F. Grassi M.D., dr. M. Guarisco M.D., dr. F. Rossini M.D., dr. M. Susta M.D., dr. P. Tettamanti M.D. and dr. M. Vivona M.D. for their continuous team-work.