

# Falls: A Geriatric Syndrome

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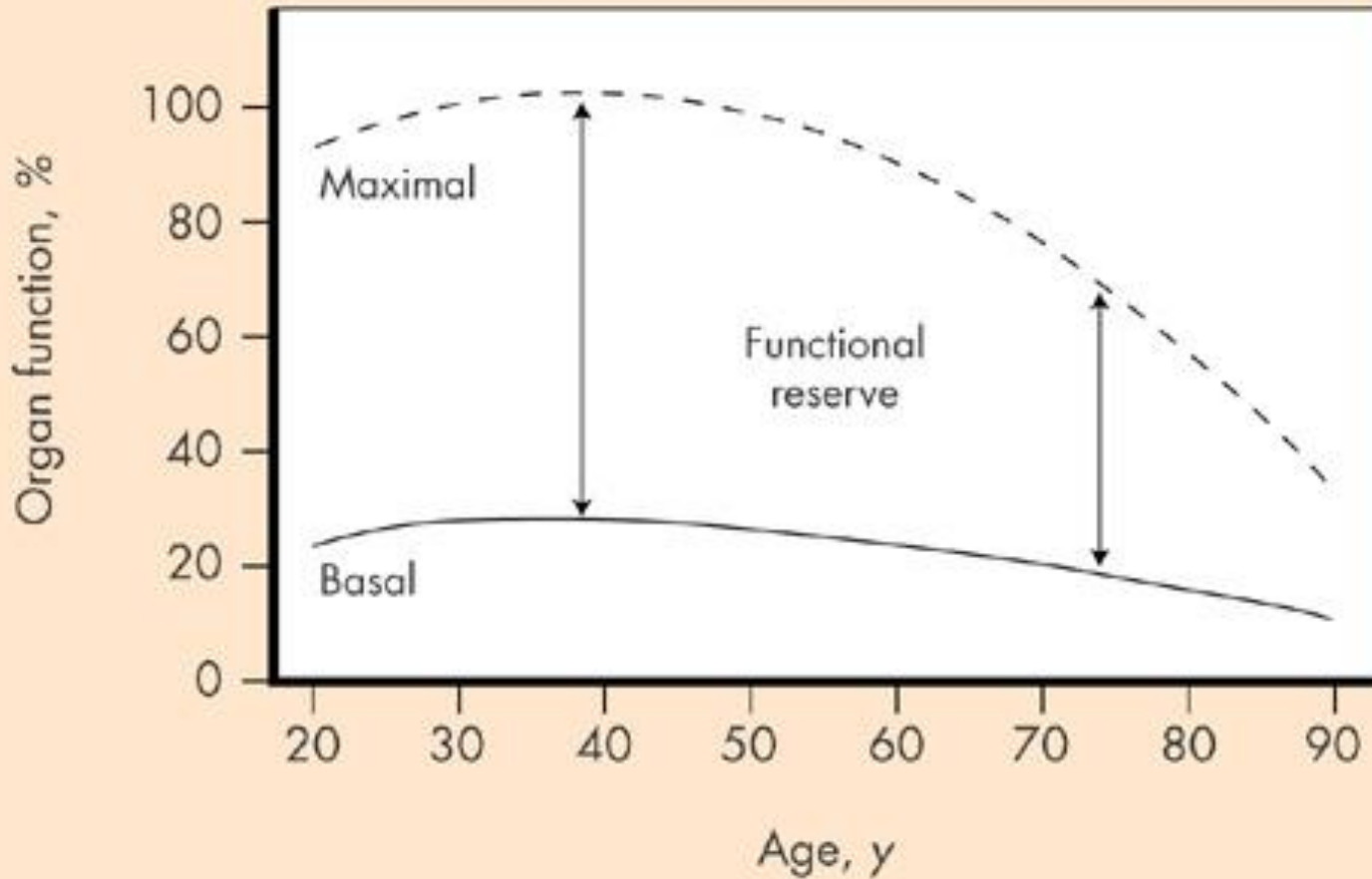
# Definition: “Syndrome”

- 📖 a group of symptoms that together are characteristic of a specific disorder, disease, or the like
- 📖 the pattern of symptoms that characterize or indicate a particular condition
  - 📖 Ex.: Parkinson’s Syndrome, Cushing’s Syndrome, Congestive Heart Failure

# Definition: “Geriatric”

- Diminished homeostatic reserve capacity of all organ systems called **homeostenosis**
- In the absence of significant stressors, homeostenosis causes no symptoms and very few restrictions on routine activities
- Progressive risk of homeostatic failure with increasing age

# Definition: “Geriatric”



# Definition: “Syndrome”

- 📖 *syn*, together, + *dromos*, a running
- 📖 a predictable, characteristic pattern of symptoms or signs that tends to occur under certain circumstances
- 📖 aggregate of symptoms and signs associated with any morbid process, together constituting the picture of the disease *Stedman's*

# Geriatric Syndrome?

**“Geriatric Syndromes are multifactorial health conditions that occur when the accumulated effects of impairments in multiple systems renders a person vulnerable to situational challenges.”**

Tinetti, Williams and Gill; Dizziness among Older Adults: A Possible Geriatric Syndrome; Ann Intern Med. 2000;132:337 - 344

# Geriatric Syndrome Characteristics

- Multifactorial etiologies
- Common risk factors among the syndromes
- Intimate association with functional impairment /decline
- Association with increased morbidity and mortality

# Geriatric Syndromes AGS\_GRS

- Dementia
- Delirium
- Urinary Incontinence\*
- Falls\*
- Gait Disturbances
- Dizziness\*
- Syncope\*
- Hearing Impairment
- Visual Impairment
- Osteopenia
- Malnutrition\*
- Eating and Feeding Problems
- Pressure Ulcers
- Sleep Problems\*

\* Classic geriatric syndromes



# 'Other' Geriatric Syndromes

Polypharmacy

Self-Neglect

Elder Abuse

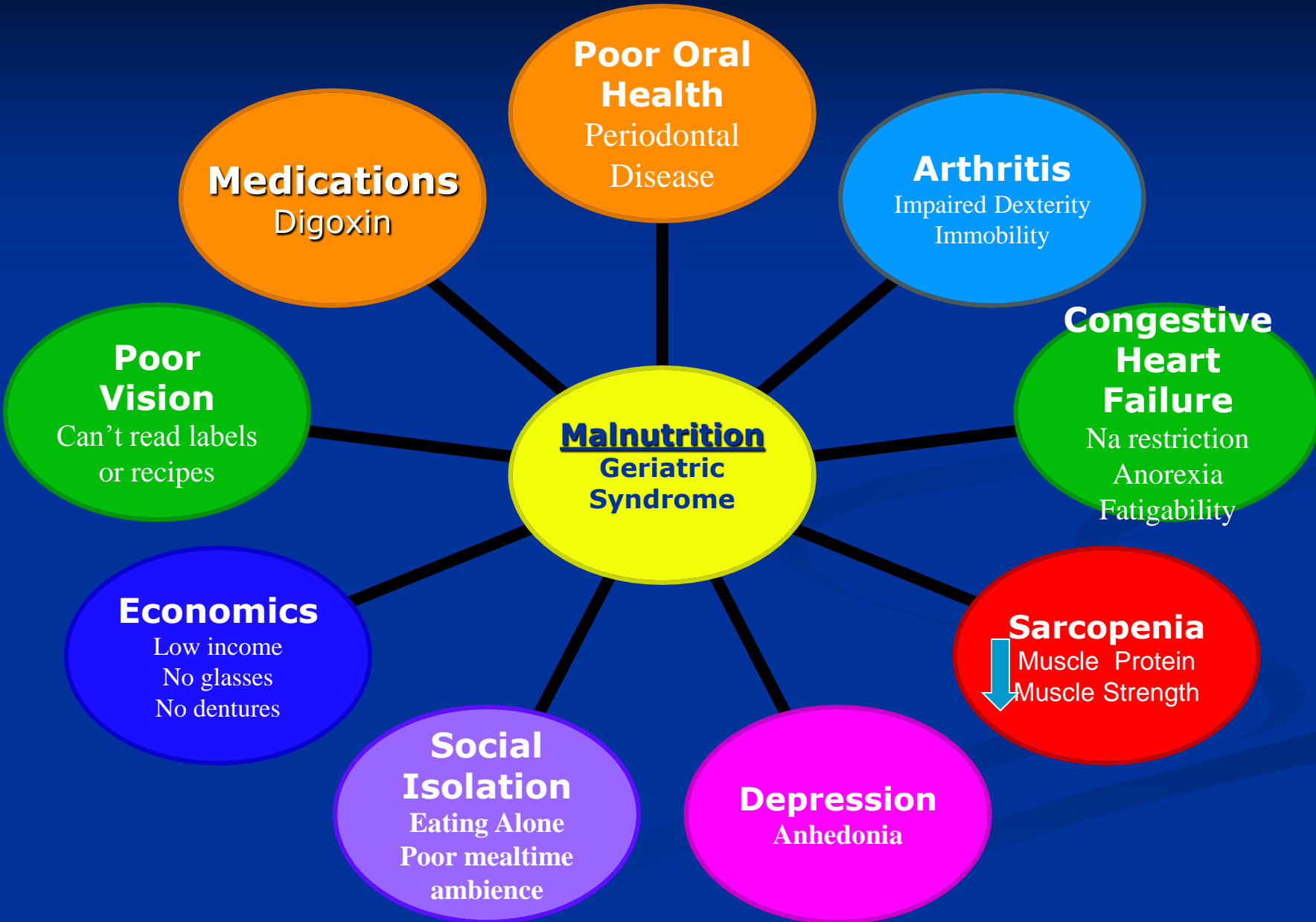
Frailty

Hypo and Hyperthermia

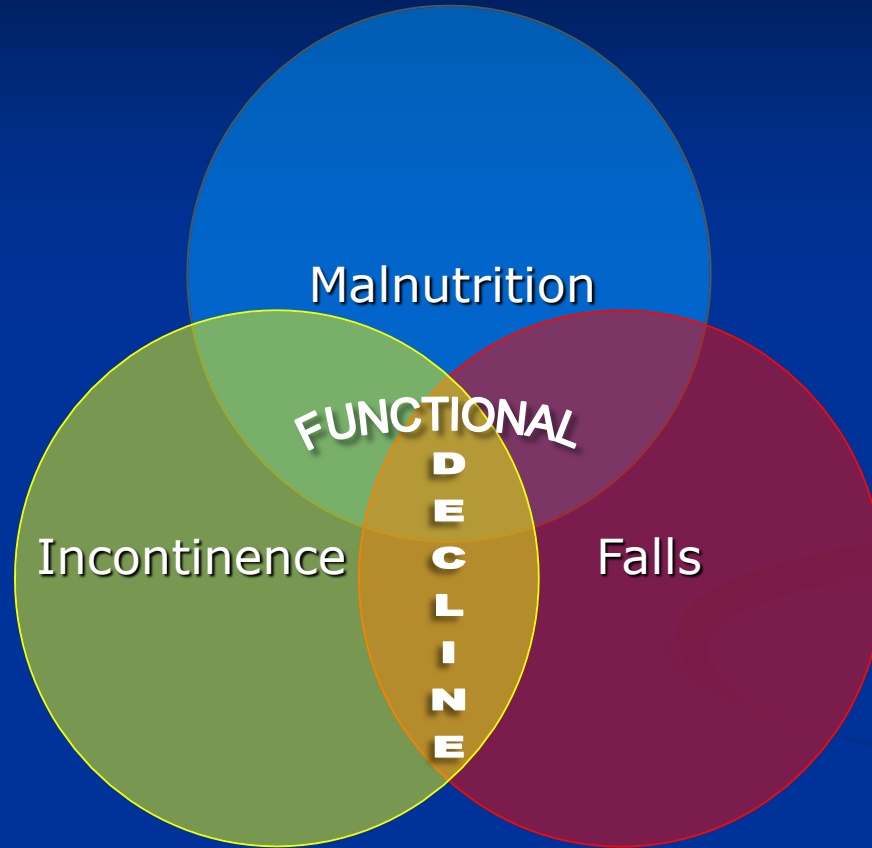
Dehydration and Electrolyte Imbalance

Iatrogenesis

# Characteristic: Multifactorial Etiology



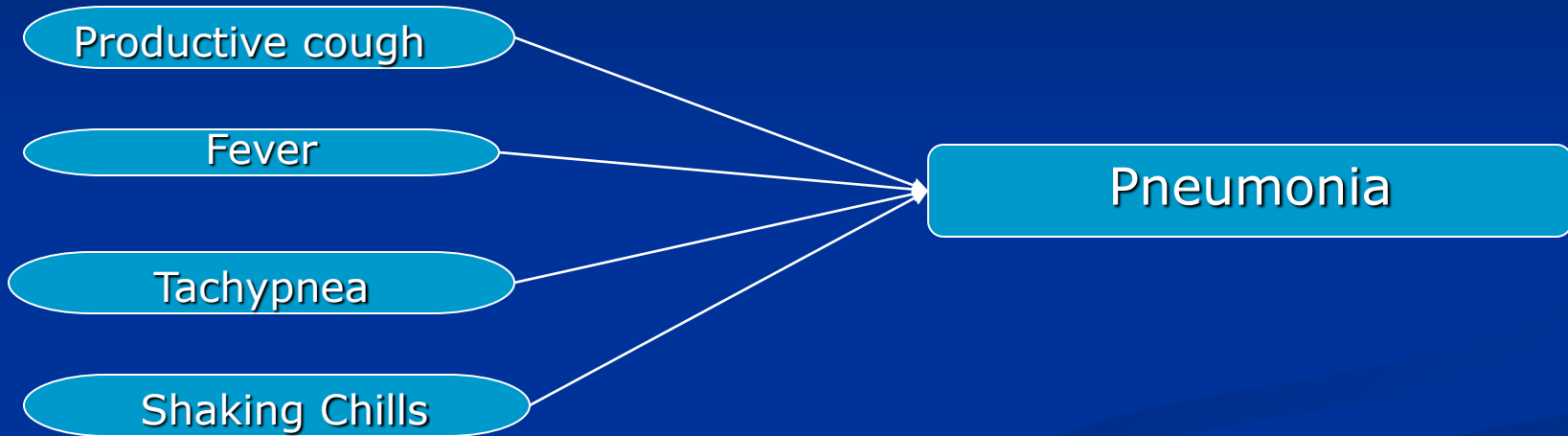
# Geriatric Syndromes



# Standard Medical Approach



# OCCAM'S RAZOR



- “Plurality must not be posited without necessity”
- Law of Parsimony of Diagnosis

# Let's Reconsider.....

- Why did Mrs. D fall?
- What is the definition of “FALL” (as a geriatric syndrome)
- How does one treat a ‘geriatric syndrome’ of FALL ?

# Geriatric Syndrome

