Doloplus-2 pain assessment: an effective tool in patients over 85 years with advanced dementia and persistent pain

F. Monacelli¹, A. Vasile Nurse², P. Odetti¹, N. Traverso³

Department of Internal Medicine and Medical Specialties (DiMI), Section of Geriatrics. University of Genova, ²Nursing Home (RSA Seniores), ³DIMES, Section of General Pathology, University of Genova, Italy

Abstract

Persistent pain in the elderly with dementia is neglected and effective pain diagnostic tools still lack. The aim of the study was to re-assess pain after 1 year in a group of elderly with dementia, resident in a Nursing Home. Doloplus-2 scale was adopted to detect pain and to evaluate its adequacy to address analgesia. Thirty-six out of 90 residents were affected by moderate-severe dementia and 23 patients with persistent pain were enrolled in the study.

The results showed a significant reduction of Doloplus-2 score in the observational period (p <0.001) and of its mean score below the pain threshold (p <0.0001).

This case analysis confirmed the clinical utility of Doloplus-2 to detect pain in patients with very advanced age and with severe dementia. The tool also confirmed its handiness and clinical applicability by nurses in order to support a systematic pain assessment in long term care. Clin Ter 2013; 164(1):e23-25. doi: 10.7417/CT.2013.1516

Key words: doloplus-2, nursing home, oldest old, pain assessment, severe dementia