**INTRODUCTION**

Differences in the presentation of GERD were previously reported according to age suggesting a less symptomatic and more severe disease in the elderly population. However, these differences were not evaluated in a prospective way at a wide national level.

**AIM**

- To describe symptoms, therapeutic strategy, and complications according to age in reflux patients over 65 years of age.
- To evaluate the relationship between the disease and health-related quality of life by the means of the Reflux-Qual Questionnaire.

**RESULTS**

- A lower frequency of pyrosis was observed in patients older than 75 years of age (75% vs 81%; p<0.05).
- Extra-esophageal symptoms were identified in 84% of patients, and respiratory and thoracic symptoms were reported in more than two-thirds of them.
- Frequency of thoracic pain was increased in patients aged over 75 years.
- Almost 50% of patients in the current study haven’t undergone an endoscopy in the last 3 years and this rate was higher (60%) in the most elderly (> 80 years).

**METHODOLOGY**

**Study design**

- Observational, prospective, multicentric study.
- Conducted in 1697 primary care settings in France.
- Between September and December 2008, a total of 4,780 patients over 65 years were included. Among them, 1,310 patients (27.4%) aged 75 years and over.

**Patients characteristics**

- Nearly two-thirds of patients were in overweight (49%) or obese (21%) with a mean BMI of 27.1 kg/m².
- There were 1,912 current or former smokers identified and 23% of patients had a history of excessive alcohol consumption.
- Comorbidities were diagnosed in 90% of patients, mostly cardiovascular and rheumatologic diseases.

**RESULTS**

- The complication rate increases after the age of 75 (RR 2), in men, in overweight and obese patients.
- In patients who had undergone an endoscopy, esophagitis was diagnosed in 71% of them; severe or complicated (BE and/or peptic stenosis) in respectively 9.3% and 7% of the cases.

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**RESULTS**

- The therapeutic approach in the current study showed that almost all patients (91%) had been advised to make lifestyle modifications but only 76% of patients had received a medical treatment (mainly PPIs).
- The quality of life was impaired in the elderly population, being more important among the eldest patients whatever severity.

**CONCLUSION**

- This large national study showed that the elderly present less frequently the typical GERD symptoms such as pyrosis and conversely the prevalence of non-specific extra-esophageal manifestations and symptoms like thoracic pain increase with age.
- An increase of severe and/or complicated esophagitis in elderly was observed, and this increase was more important in overweight patients.
- This was associated with an impaired quality of life.

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**GERD IN ELDERLY: FINAL RESULTS OF THE PROSPECTIVE SENIOR STUDY**

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