

## Hip fractures in the elderly: Factors associated with non-operative treatment

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### INTRODUCTION:

Hip fractures in elderly patients is associated with significant morbidity and mortality. Guidelines by the Scottish Intercollegiate Guidelines Network (SIGN), British Orthopaedic Association, and the American Academy of Orthopaedic Surgeons advocate early operative treatment, to enable early mobilisation, better functional outcome, and improved quality of life.<sup>1</sup> Despite this, not all undergo operative treatment. This study aims to review factors behind non-operative treatment of hip fractures in elderly patients.

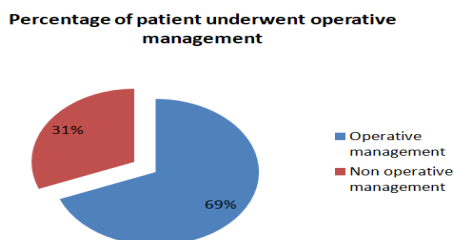
### MATERIALS & METHODS:

We conducted a retrospective study of patients aged more than 65 years old with a hip fracture admitted to our centre between February 2022 and February 2023. Reasons for non-operative treatment were analysed descriptively.

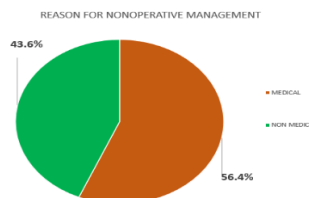
### RESULTS:

The analysis demonstrated that 69% of patients (n=88) underwent surgical fixation, while 31% of patients (n=29) did not proceed with surgery. Out of the 29 patients, 56.4% were managed non-operatively as they were medically unfit and high operative risk, while the remaining did not undergo surgery due to non-medical reasons, namely refusal of surgery on the part of either the patient or family members.

**Figure 1: Percentage of patient that underwent operation**



**Figure 2: Factors contributing to nonoperative management of fractures**



### DISCUSSION:

Surgical treatment in elderly patients with hip fractures can decrease mortality rate to half compared to non-surgical treatment.<sup>2</sup> The major factors affecting decision for operation are medical reasons, and patient or family refusal. A multidisciplinary approach in the form of an orthogeriatrics team made up of orthopaedic surgeons, geriatricians, and anaesthetists, could facilitate medical optimisation of these patients to enable them to undergo surgery. Awareness on the part of treating clinicians is also needed to be able to educate patient and carers regarding benefits of surgical treatment vs. the risks, and to alleviate any fears they may have.

### CONCLUSION:

Despite guidelines advocating fixation of hip fractures, one third of patients still end up without any surgical intervention. Reasons for non-operative treatment can be addressed by an orthogeriatrics team as well as increased awareness among healthcare professionals and the public of the positive outcome associated with surgical treatment in elderly patients with hip fractures.

### REFERENCES:

1. Tay E. Hip fractures in the elderly: operative versus nonoperative management. Singapore Med J. 2016 Apr;57(4):178-81.
2. Hwang, KT., Moon, JK. & Kim, YH. Do we really need a surgery for hip fractures in elderly patients? Mortality rate and influencing factors. Arthroplasty 1, 7 (2019).