

Psychoneuroimmunological Factors Of Physical Impairment of Aging Period

Abstract

The concept of life span assumes that old age is a period of development being a balance of gains and losses. Aging goes hand in hand with increasing losses and decreasing gains. The system theory perceives a human being as a psychophysical system which can be easily seen in critical periods, e.g. old age. Thus, it is assumed that psyche and soma are interdependent. Taking into consideration the way old age is perceived, the balance of way and the feeling of life control, one may assume that these factors may influence physical abilities and somatic health of an organism. Old age is not an illness but increased vulnerability to illnesses. Speaking objectively, one may say that age as a feature of getting old weakens the immunological system of the organism in a natural way and thus it increases the vulnerability to a variety of illnesses and decreases physical abilities. It is possible to avoid the physiological processes connected with aging. One may hypothesize, however, that a positive approach towards old age, good balance of life and a feeling of internal control slow down the processes of aging of cells and vice versa. The overall aim of slowing down these processes is not to prolong human life but to increase the quality of life.

The research carried out was based on the assumption that the way a person sees his or her life, the balance of life and the feeling of control go hand in hand with physical agility. The research covered 436 people, i.e. 120 men and 316 women, all of them over 60. A set of mutual relationships of the indicated variables was determined and an analysis of repeated regression was made.

The conclusion is: better balance of life and better positive self-image go hand in hand with better physical agility of the examined individuals. It is difficult to say which of the factors are primary or secondary. It seems that there is an interdependence.

Key words: *psychoneuroimmunology, aging, feeling of life control, , quality of life.*