Polypharmacy

- Polypharmacy is defined as the use of multiple drugs, usually 5 or more, by a patient.
- Polypharmacy has been associated with multiple adverse effects in older adults including morbidity, hospitalization, and even death.
- It is safe to stop a medication if it is no longer providing benefit to the patient or the risks of the medication now outweigh its potential benefit, even if the patient has been on it a long time.
- Prescribing cascades often lead to polypharmacy.
- Goals of care should be incorporated into any review of medications.
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