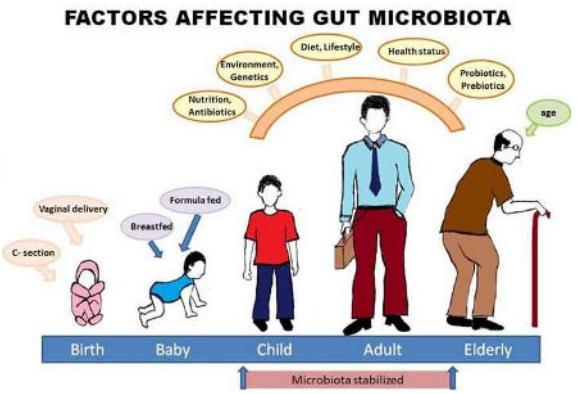




ANATOMICAL CHANGES IN THE GASTROINTESTINAL SYSTEM

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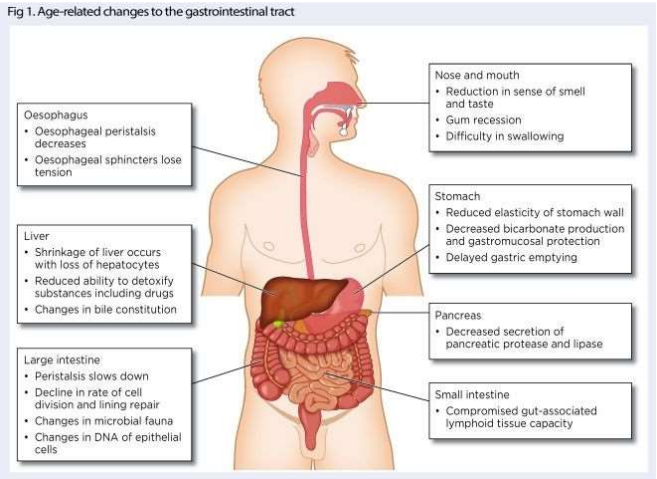
Thank you Missah!

In this lesson, we will explore the changes that take place in the gastrointestinal system as people age followed by a serious condition called gastrointestinal bleeding.

So, good studying!

Changes In The GI Tract

- Teeth become loose
- Decreased saliva
- Muscle tone of sphincter
- Acid reflux and heartburn
- Decrease in hydrochloric acid
- Slowing peristalsis
- Fecal incontinence
- Shrinking liver
- Decreased metabolism



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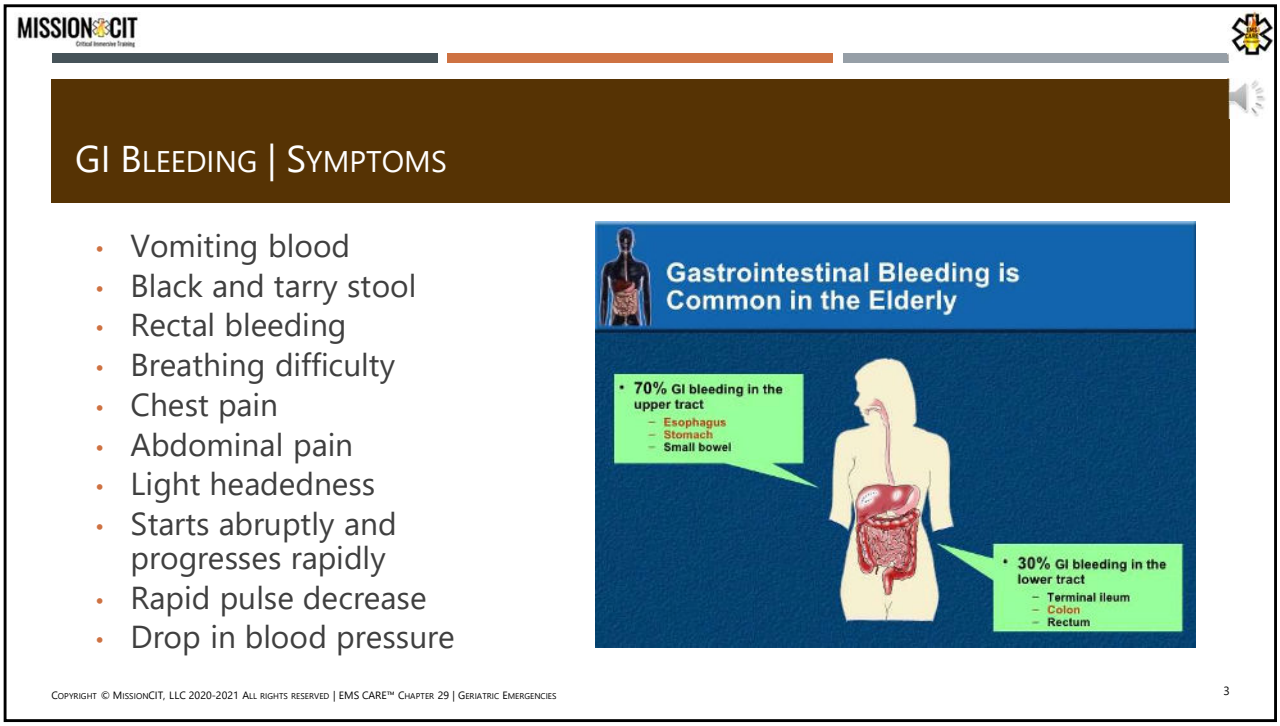
There is a profound change in almost every part of the gastrointestinal system. First off, the teeth become loose and may even fall out, thereby making it difficult to chew food finely. There is a decrease in saliva and the resultant lubrication that can make it difficult to swallow food.

Moving down, the muscle tone of the sphincter located between the esophagus and stomach becomes loose, and this can cause regurgitation of food, leading to acid reflux and heartburn. Next, there is a decrease in the hydrochloric acid levels in the stomach, and this impacts

digestion and absorption.

The slowing peristalsis increases constipation while weak rectal muscles increase fecal incontinence. Finally, the liver shrinks as the blood flow decreases, resulting in decreased metabolism.

All these changes impact the way food is digested and the nutrients are absorbed by the body.



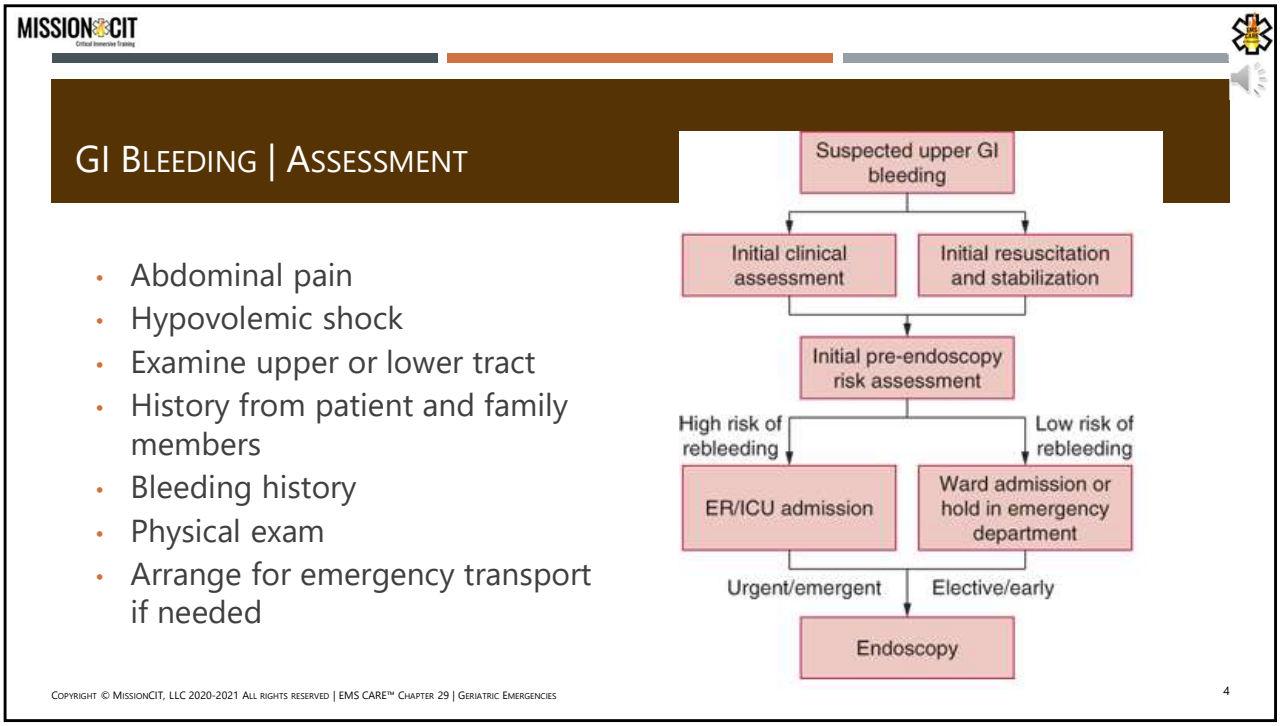
In patients aged 65 years and older, gastrointestinal bleeding is a common condition. The most common causes are hemorrhoids and colorectal cancer, but they lead to only minor bleeding. On the other hand, the causes of major bleeding are peptic ulcer, diverticular disease, and angiodysplasia.

Some of the signs and symptoms to watch out for are:

- Vomiting blood that can resemble coffee grounds
- Black and tarry stool
- Rectal bleeding, usually with stool
- Lightheadedness

- Abdominal pain
- Chest pain
- Breathing difficulty

If the bleeding starts abruptly and progresses rapidly, the patient could go into a shock that is characterized by rapid pulse decrease, unconsciousness, drop in blood pressure, and infrequent urination.



Gastrointestinal bleeding is fairly easy to diagnose as blood exiting the G I Tract is the most definitive sign. In the case of mild bleeding, the patient will complain of abdominal pain, so examine the other related symptoms.

Moderate to severe blood loss can lead to hypovolemic shock, so that's something to watch out for. Examine if the bleeding is from the upper or lower G I tract, as this can help to narrow down the underlying condition.

Get the history from the patient or caregivers to determine the symptoms, medical history, and the time

of onset of bleeding. In particular, get information about any bleeding incidents or history. Next, do a physical exam to check if the patient is in a hypovolemic shock. Monitor the vital signs and arrange for emergency transportation if needed. Communicate the problem to both the patient and the family members or caregivers.

With this, we have come to the end of this lesson, and in the next, Missah will take you through the changes in the genitourinary system.