

Preface



Margaret A. Pisani, MD, MPH
Guest Editor

People age 65 and older are the fastest growing segment of the United States' population. In the 2000 census, 12% of the population (35 million people) was age 65 and older. That number is projected to increase to 66 million, or 16% of the population, by the year 2050. Life expectancy also has increased; recent Centers for Disease Control and Prevention reports indicate life expectancy at 77.8 years. Age-adjusted death rates have decreased significantly with the largest changes occurring in older patients. Despite these trends, the 10 leading causes of death include several pulmonary etiologies including lung cancer, chronic respiratory diseases, influenza, and pneumonia.

This issue of *Clinics in Chest Medicine* is devoted to understanding the impact of respiratory diseases in older patients. It includes a review of allergy and immunology of the aging lung, sleep in older patients, and reviews on specific disease topics including asthma, chronic obstructive lung disease, pulmonary hypertension, lung cancer, pneumonia, tuberculosis, and atypical mycobacteria. There are also reviews on the use of mechanical ventilation and noninvasive ventilation in

older patients, and, importantly, end-of-life considerations.

Focusing on issues unique to older patients who have lung disease is important to improving their care, reducing morbidity, and improving their quality of life. This issue represents an excellent review of many lung diseases patients face as they age. I am grateful to the authors for their outstanding contributions to this issue. I owe a special thanks to Sarah Barth at Elsevier, who helped me at every step along the way. This issue is dedicated to my family, especially Alex and Sara, who kept me going on this and all of my projects.

Margaret A. Pisani, MD, MPH
*Section of Pulmonary
and Critical Care Medicine
Department of Internal Medicine
Yale University School of Medicine
300 Cedar Street
P.O. Box 208057
New Haven, CT 06520-8057, USA*

E-mail address: margaret.pisani@yale.edu