

Letter to the editor

Will the Study of Epigenetics Revolutionize Geriatric Surgery?

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Increased life expectancy has brought a heightened demand for healthcare solutions targeted towards the needs of the elderly [1,2]. One of these needs is for treatments to improve outcomes in wound healing. Significant challenges in surgery, especially geriatric surgery, often involve wounds that do not heal properly [2,3]. Comorbidities, lifestyle and environmental factors also influence the healing process [4,5,6,7]. Could future epigenetic therapies play a role in helping to solve some of these problems? There is growing realization of the dynamic and malleable nature of the epigenome and the role that this may play both in adaption / response to diverse environments and in numerous disease / health processes – including outcomes in wound healing [8, 9, 10,11,12,13,14,15,16]. The development and refinement of epigenetic modifiers which are specific and targeted toward wound healing will likely lead to treatments that may improve surgical outcomes in elderly patients. Healthy elders provide longevity dividends to society and the economy via accumulated knowledge and wisdom applied toward encore entrepreneurship, mentorship, and volunteerism [17,18,19,20].

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