

INTRODUCTION

Aging, the normal process of time-related change begins with birth and continues throughout life. Aging involves a gradual and progressive loss of function over time, so the effect of aging may place older people at higher risk for disease (*Dummer, 2008*).

Elderly people constitute a vulnerable group that needs special care. In Egypt retirement begins at the age of 60 years in governmental and public and private sector jobs (*Ibrahim, 2006*). By 2030, the elderly population throughout the world is expected to increase to 973 million people, and the number of elderly people will be more than triple in developing countries, which will account for 71% of the world's elderly population (*Henley, 2004*). The total population in Egypt is 77.505.756 July, 2006, the percentage of the population aged 65 years and over accounts for 4.4% of the total population (*CAPMAS, 2009*).

Cardiovascular diseases are common chronic illnesses in older population, the heart valves becomes thicker and stiffer and the heart muscle, arteries lose their elasticity, calcium and fat deposits accumulate within arterial walls and veins become increasingly tortuous as a results of the normal physical changes associated with aging (*Antai-Otong, 2004*).

Many problems commonly associated with aging are disease processes that result from a combination of heart disease, poor dietary habits and lack of exercise (*Rosdahl & Kowalski 2007*). The well-being of an aged person depends on physical, mental, social, and environmental factors, a total assessment includes evaluating all major body systems, social and

mental status and the ability of the person to function independently despite a chronic illness (*Hazzard et al., 2000*).

Quality of life may be seen positively in terms of life satisfaction and feelings of well being, goals and expectations that have been achieved. It can also be seen as reflecting symptom severity, level of impairment or handicap and reflecting loss (*Zarit et al., 2002*).

People living in rural areas have less access to health care than those in urban areas because of persistent poverty, fewer health services and practitioners, and transportation needed to travel longer distances to access acute and primary preventive services. Public health nurses have historically provided care to people living in rural settings to promote health and prevent illness and injury (*Lvanov & Blue, 2008*).

The goal of home health care nursing is to provide services to individuals and families and to promote, maintain and restore health. In most cases, this is achieved through short term, intermittent, direct nursing care made in home visit and supervise those services to assist with activities of daily living; teach clients, families and caregivers how to provide self care; and use communication skills to enhance continuity of care (*Hunt, 2009*).

Significance of the Study:

Allover the world, heart disease and stroke incidence is increasing with increasing age, in 2001 for example 50 - 74% of hospitalization for cardiovascular disease, coronary heart disease, angina, or stroke occurred among people over 65 years of age, and people over 85 years of age constitute 84% of cardiovascular and coronary heart disease deaths (*Clark, 2008*).

In Egypt, cardiovascular diseases are now the main cause of death, being responsible for 42.5% of all deaths, while 20 years earlier they accounted for only 12.4% of mortality. Statistics from the Egyptian Ministry of Health show that there is an increase in life expectancy; over the past three decades, it increased for males from 51.5 to 62.8 years and for females from 53.8 to 66.4 years. The increasing number of elderly people with cardiovascular disease, increases the need for special care to perform activity of daily living in a healthy manner, especially in rural areas due to people living in rural areas have less access to healthcare, persistent poverty and fewer health services, practitioner and transportation. So it's important to conduct this study to assess quality of life for elderly people with cardiovascular diseases (*Central Agency of Public Mobilization and Statistics, 2006*).