

A Demographic Analysis on the Average Period of Receiving Medical Care from the Viewpoint of Disease Structure

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Since Japan has become one of the countries that has the longest life-span in the world, health, or "Quality of the living" (Koizumi 1985), has become the serious subject. This study aims to find a clue for the improvement of the quality of the living by analyzing average period to receive medical care.

According to the rates of estimated patients per 1,000 population, rates of outpatients decrease at 80 years old or higher while those of inpatients rise with the age. The rates of super-senior woman who is neither inpatient nor outpatient are much lower than man's.

We find the following two points from life table analysis. First, average periods of both staying in and going to hospital tend to shorten at less than 40 years old in man and woman, even the life expectancy and the health period are lengthened gradually at each age of both sexes. This may indicate "compression of the diseases", in which the average period to receive medical care is shortened by the mortality decline as Fries (1980) pointed out.

Second, the shares of the disease of the circulatory system accounted for more than 20 percent of the period of both outpatient and inpatient and, in addition, the shares become bigger at older age.

These diseases sometimes cause serious complications. We may lengthen average health period as well as a life expectancy if we can prevent these diseases.