**Table 2.5** Textbook distinction between normal *vs.* pathological decrements in physiological performance in old age. Retabulated from ref. 38, p. 177.

| Pathological process | 'Normal' age-related decline |
|---|---|
| Diabetes | Impaired glucose tolerance |
| Insomnia due to nocturia, pain and depression | Altered sleep pattern |
| Accelerated osteoporosis | Bone loss |
| Cataracts and macular degeneration | Impaired sight |
| Effects of ototoxic drugs, diuretics or vascular disorders | Impaired hearing |
| White matter lesions due to hypertension and Alzheimer's disease | Declining intellectual function |
| Parkinson's, Alzheimer's, cerebrovascular disease, dementia, vestibular lesions, cervical spondylosis and visual problems | Minor gait slowing and balance impairment |

**Table 2.6** Textbook distinction between clinical diseases and geriatric syndromes. Retabulated from ref. 52, p. 99.

| Clinical diseases | Geriatric syndromes |
|---|---|
| Hypertension | Disability |
| Arthritis | Hearing impairment |
| Heart disease | Urinary incontinence |
| Malignant neoplasm | Falls |
| Influenza | Visual impairment |
| Diabetes | Frailty |
| Alzheimer's disease | |
| Sinusitis | |
| Ulcers | |
| Stroke | |
| Asthma | |
| Emphysema | |
| Kidney disease | |
| Liver disease | |

While no clear criteria are presented to distinguish normal senescent changes from pathological ones, there is some recognition that this binary distinction can be problematic. For example, according to *Davidson's*, "the physiological features of normal aging have been identified by examining disease-free populations of older people, to separate the effects of pathology from those due to time alone. However, the fraction of older people who age without disease ultimately declines to very low levels so that use of the term 'normal' becomes debatable" (p. 167). *Harrison's* notes that the separation occurs "somewhat artificially" (p. 94 e-1). This problem is further outlined in the *Textbook of Medicine*: "There has been a long-running debate on