

Aktuelne teme/  
*Current topics*

EMPATHY AS A KEY OF COMMUNICATION  
IN THE AID TO PATIENT

EMPATIJA KAO KLJUČ KOMUNIKACIJE  
KOD PRUŽANJA POMOĆI OBOLELOM

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*Ključne reči*

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*Key words*

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*Apstrakt*

Jedan od suštinskih elemenata u interakciji sa onkološkim pacijentom je upravo empatija. Empatija znači osećati šta drugi osećaju; tako na primer, ukoliko se kod obolelog javi anksioznost, mnogi lekari i drugo medicinsko osoblje se osećaju anksiozno, isto kao što osećaju olakšanje kada se ublaži patnja obolelog. Empatija, u najširem smislu reči, znači "staviti se na mesto onkološkog bolesnika", pa prema tome, podrazumeva približavanje njegovim patnjama, strahovima, očekivanjima, itd., i pretpostavlja neospornu psihološku pomoć u cilju poboljšanja kvaliteta života i mnogo boljeg suočavanja sa bolešću i mogućim oporavkom.

Empatija je stav, lični stil, sposobnost komuniciranja koja u celosti povoljno deluje na razvoj pozitivnih međuljudskih odnosa. Stoga, što je više budemo poznavali i primenjivali, više ćemo napredovati u pogledu uspostavljanja dobrog odnosa sa pacijentom, u smislu pomoći. Na ovaj način možemo postići poboljšanje njegovog psihičkog stanja (smanjenje tenzije, smanjenje umora i konfuzije, povećanje živosti, značajno smanjenje bola i depresivne simptomatologije, itd.). Neka najnovija istraživanja su ukazala na značajno poboljšanje nekih imunoloških parametara kod onkoloških pacijenata.

UVOD

*"Nema mnogo zabavnih stvari u medicini, ali ima  
jako mnogo lekovitog u zabavnim stvarima"*  
Josh Bilings, 1818-1885

Jedna od suštinskih karakteristika pacijenata obolelih od malignih bolesti je psihološki stres praćen depresijom. Intenzitet ovakve kliničke slike zavisi od socijalnih i psiholoških faktora, prisustva bola, adaptacije obolelog na bolest i načina na koji se suočava sa istom. Veoma je važno imati u vidu čitav niz faktora koji mogu da iskomplikuju psihološku evoluciju onkološkog bolesnika (socijalna izolacija, skorašnji gubici, sklonost pesimizmu, prisustvo bola, ekonomski pritisak, antecedensi u poremećaju raspoloženja, itd.).

Efekte stresa i depresije na razvoj bolesti su u velikoj meri nepoznati, ali socijalna pomoć u širem smislu, po svemu sudeći predstavlja značajan faktor koji ublažava efekte psihosocijalnog stresa i prateće imunološke disfunkcije. Inhibicija neuroendokrine i imunološke funkcije mogla bi da utiče na incidenciju i evoluciju kancera, putem smanjenja imunovigilance, ili stvaranja ili funkcionisanja prirodnih citolitičkih ćelija (NK) koje odbacuju tumore.

Jedan od suštinskih elemenata u interakciji sa onkološkim pacijentom je upravo empatija. Empatija znači osećati šta drugi osećaju; tako na primer, ukoliko se kod obolelog javi anksioznost, mnogi lekari i drugo medicinsko osoblje se osećaju anksiozno, isto kao što osećaju olakšanje

INTRODUCTION

*"There are not many funny things in the medicine,  
but there is very many medicine in the funny things"*  
Josh Bilings, 1818-1885

One of the essential characteristics in the patients with cancer is psychological stress and the depression. The intensity of these clinical pictures depends on social, and psychological factors, the existence of pain, and the adaptation of the patient to the disease and the ability to face it. It is important to take care of a series of factors that might complicate the psychological evolution of the patient with cancer (social isolation, recent losses, pessimistic tendencies, presence at of the pain, economic, antecedent pressures of upheavals of humor, etc.). The effects of stress and the depression on the outcome of the disease to a large extent, are not known, but the social support seems to constitute an important factor that mitigates the effects of stress, psycho-social, and associated immune dysfunction. The inhibition of the neuroendocrine, and immune functions, will be able to influence the incidence and evolution of the cancer through a reduction of the immunovigilance or the production or function of the natural cytotoxic cells (NK) that reject the tumors. One of the essential elements in the interaction with the patients with cancer is, indeed, the empathy. Empathy is to feel what others feel; thus, for example, when being present at the anguish of the patient, many doctors and nurses feel distressed and, at the same time, enlightened, when the suffer-

kada se ublaži patnja obolelog. Empatija, u najširem smislu reči, znači "staviti se na mesto onkološkog bolesnika", pa prema tome, podrazumeva približavanje njegovim patnjama, strahovima, očekivanjima, itd., i pretpostavlja neospornu psihološku pomoć u cilju poboljšanja kvaliteta života i mnogo bolje suočavanja sa bolešću i mogućim oporavkom.

Pomoću empatije možemo umanjiti osećaj nemoći i neprilagođenosti, do kojih dolazi zbog nedostatka informacije. Empatijski odnos dovodi, generalno rečeno, do smanjenja depresivne slike, poremećaja svakodnevnog života, nivoa anksioznosti i poremećaja raspoloženja. Ukoliko pored ovakve "empatijske" perspektive razvijemo i druge tehnike, kao što su progresivna muskularna relaksacija, hipnoza, duboko disanje, meditacija, bioretroalimentacija, pasivna relaksacija i vođena imaginacija (npr.: zamislite neku veoma prijatnu scenu koju ćete lako zapamtiti; zamislite svoj imuni sistem kako uništava rak, itd.), možemo postići smanjenje stresa i fizičkih komplikacija (mučnina, povraćanja, emocionalne patnje, itd.) koji se obično javljaju prilikom hemioterapijskog ili radioterapijskog lečenja kancera.

Naravno, empatijska sposobnost čini deo razvoja ličnosti i usko je povezana sa edukativnom praksom primljenom u detinjstvu. Ali, nema ni najmanje sumnje da čini suštinski element u interakciji sa pacijentom, u cilju razumevanja i pružanja pomoći. Empatijska sposobnost se prevodi u jedan poseban senzibilitet za identifikovanje emocija drugih ličnosti: razumeti ili tumačiti situacije sa stanovišta drugih, i doživeti u samom sebi emocije drugih ljudi.

Osim toga, treba napomenuti da ovaj vid orijentacije, lečenja i psihološke pripreme, sasvim izvesno doprinosi ojačavanju humanitarnih ideala, koji su, s druge strane, toliko potrebni u bolničkom lečenju i medicinskoj pomoći. Empatijska perspektiva, zajedno sa drugim tehnikama, (kognoscitivna terapija, vođena imaginacija, relaksacija, itd.), kod onkoloških pacijenata može umanjiti anksioznost, agresivnost, itd. Takođe ima pozitivan efekat na locus interne kontrole.

Najnovija istraživanja (Fawzy y Arndt, 1995) pokazuju da je ovaj psihološki stil u stanju da poboljša različite imunološke parametre pacijenta, kao što je prirodna citotoksična aktivnost (NK), broj limfocita u perifernoj krvi i reaktivnost mešanih kultura limfocita. Očigledno se radi o postizanju jednog psihoterapeutskog stava koji je u stanju da olakša patnju koja je pratilac dijagnoze i evolucije kancera. Uspех ovakvih intervencija u velikoj meri zavisi od pružene pomoći, saosećajnosti i empatije. U različitim kontrolisanim istraživanjima o ovoj vrsti delovanja, došlo se do raznih psiholoških benefita: smanjenja emocionalnih problema, konfuzije i socijalne izolacije, značajnog smanjenja seksualne disfunkcije, naročito povezane sa dijagnostikovanjem i lečenjem genitalnog kancera, uspostavljanje efektivnih oblika suočavanja sa psihološkim problemima, smanjenje negativnog afekta, aktivnije korišćenje vremena, porast stope vraćanja profesionalnim aktivnostima i realističnija perspektiva u pogledu života.

Ovaj psihoterapeutski stil se može postići jedino putem efikasne komunikacije i sposobnosti koju imamo da damo empatijski odgovor, odnosno, odgovore koji otkrivaju obolelog i pomažu mu da spozna da su njegovi problemi potpuno shvaćeni; prema tome, njegovo mišljenje se veoma

ing of the patient is alleviated. The empathy in the amplest sense of the word supposes "to put itself in the place of the patients with cancer". Therefore, to approach its sufferings, Top of Form Fears, expectations, etc., does assume an undeniable psychological support in order to improve their quality of life and to face the disease and its possible recovery, far better than without doing that. By means of the empathy, we can reduce the sensation of impotence and unsuitability due to the lack of information. An empathic relation produces, on a large scale, a diminution of the depressive picture of the alterations of the daily life, the levels of anxiety, and the alterations of humor. If besides this "empathic" perspective, we developed other techniques like progressive muscular relaxation, the hypnosis, the deep breathing, the meditation, the bioretroalimentionation, the passive relaxation and guided imagination (EP: a very pleasant scene imagine that remembers easily; its immune system imagines destroying to the cancer, etc.), we will be able to assure a reduction of stress and of the physical complications (nausea, vomiting, emotional suffering, etc.) that usually accompany the chemotherapeutics or radiotherapy treatment of the cancer. Naturally, the empathic ability form leaves from the development of the personality and has one improved relation with the received educative practices in the childhood. But the minor does not fit the doubts that he constitutes an essential element in the interaction with the patient to be able to understand and to help him. The empathic ability is translated in a special sensitivity to identify emotions of other people, to include/understand, or to interpret the situations from the point of view of others, and to reproduce within themselves the emotions of the others.

In addition, it agrees to emphasize, that this type of direction, treatment and psychological preparation unfailingly contributes to reinforcement of the humanitarian ideals, so necessary in the medical aid and hospitality. The empathic perspective next to other techniques (cognitive therapy, guided imagination, relaxation, etc.), can diminish in the patients with cancer anxiety, aggressiveness, etc. Also it has a positive effect in place of internal control. Very recent studies (2) demonstrate that this psychological style is able to improve several immunological parameters of the patient, such as the natural cytotoxic activity (NK), the number of lymphocytes of the peripheral blood, and the reactivity of the mixed cultures of lymphocytes. There was evidently a trial to secure a psychotherapeutics attitude able to alleviate the suffering that accompanies the diagnosis and evolution of the cancer. The success of these interventions depends to a great extent on support, compassion, and empathy. In different studies controlling this type of interventions diverse psychological benefits have been obtained: diminution of the emotional problems, confusion and social isolation, significant reduction of the sexual dysfunction specifically related to the diagnosis and treatment of the genital cancer, establishment of effective forms to face the psychological problems, reduction of the negative affection, more active use of the time, increase of the rate of return in the vocational and perspective activities more realistic in the life.

This psychotherapeutics style, only if we can obtain it by means of the effective communication and the ability that we must to produce empathic answers, that is to say, answers that reveal the patient and they present to him their problems which have been included/understood perfectly that, there-

uzima u obzir i stavljaju se u pogon mere potrebne za rešavanje (ili pokušaj rešavanja) njegovih problema. Empatija je odlučujući faktor u međuljudskim odnosima, na taj način što aktivno učestuje pacijenta u njegovoj samonezi obavezno zahteva postojanje empatije, empatijskog stava koji ne može da se glumi niti da se improvizuje. Može se pomoći jedino ukoliko se shvati "dubinski" šta druga osoba oseća; Zbog toga empatija podrazumeva jednu brižljivu percepciju obolelog i njegovog okruženja. U isto vreme, treba imati dovoljno sposobnosti da se to razumevanje pokaže obolelom, i da on to oseti. Empatija je stav, lični stil, sposobnost komuniciranja koja u celosti povoljno deluje na razvoj pozitivnih međuljudskih odnosa. Stoga, što je više budemo poznavali i primenjivali, više ćemo napredovati u pogledu uspostavljanja dobrog odnosa sa pacijentom, u smislu pomoći. Na ovaj način možemo postići poboljšanje njegovog psihičkog stanja (smanjenje tenzije, smanjenje umora i konfuzije, povećanje živosti, značajno smanjenje bola i depresivne simptomatologije, itd.). Neka najnovija istraživanja su ukazala na značajno poboljšanje nekih imunoloških parametara kod onkoloških pacijenata.

Ovo poboljšanje imunog sistema se prevodi u manju tendenciju pojave recidiva i značajno smanjenje smrtnosti.

Bazirajući se na postojećim istraživanjima, može se reći da ne postoji ni najmanja sumnja da onkološki pacijenti mogu imati mnogo više koristi, kako u pogledu fizičkog stanja, tako i u emocionalnom pogledu, od specifičnih psiholoških postupaka, koji su u stanju da poboljšaju njihovo fizičko i duševno stanje. Ali, zato je, takođe, potrebna jedna psihoedukativna intervencija na medicinskom osoblju (lekarima, sestrama, itd.) što će omogućiti modifikovanje njihovih strategija (empatijski stav) da bi se suočili sa problemima pacijenta i njegove porodice, a naročito kada je reč o problemu bola i smrti. Ova vrsta praktičnih seminara o "efikasnoj komunikaciji" kod medicinskog osoblja podiže njihovu profesionalnost na viši nivo, razvija osećaj etike i u ogromnoj meri poboljšava kvalitet života pacijenata.

fore, its opinion considers very important and that they are going away to start up the measures necessary to solve (or to try to solve) their problems. The empathy is a decisive factor in the interpersonal relationships, of such a form that the active participation of the patient in his own medical treatment requires necessarily existence of empathy, development of an empathic attitude that cannot be pretended nor be improvised. It is only possible to help if it is understood "in depth" what the other person feels; for that reason the empathy implies a careful perception of the patient and his surroundings. At the same time, it is necessary to have enough ability to communicate this understanding to the patient and perceives who is it. The empathy is an attitude, a personal style, a communication ability that favors in its totality the development of positive interpersonal relationships. For that reason, the more we abound in the knowledge and practice, the more we shall advance in the establishment of a good aid to the each particular patient. Of this form we could be able to improve : psychological state (reduction of the tension, decrease of the fatigue and the confusion, increase of the vigor, decrease the significance of the pain and the depressive group of symptoms, etc.). Some very recent studies show that they have reached important improvements of some immunological parameters in the patients with cancer. This improvement of the immunological system is translated in a smaller tendency to the recidives and in a significant decrease of the mortality.

Based upon the existing studies, even the smallest doubt does not have to fit in the group of the patients with cancer. They are possible to benefit physically and emotionally from psychological procedures and specifically, able to improve their physical and psychological status. However, a certain psycho educational intervention in the sanitary personnel (doctors, nurses, etc.) is needed also, in order to achieve that goal, which allows for modification of the strategies (empathic attitude) that will enable them to face the problems of the particular patient and his relatives, especially in the field of pain management and death. This type of practical seminars on "effective communication" for medical personnel to elevate their professionalism, will also develop their sense of the ethics, and intensify the improvement of the quality of daily life of the cancer patients.

Prevod sa španskog: Snežana Mikić

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## Abstract

One of the essential elements in the interaction with the patients with cancer is, indeed, the empathy. Empathy is to feel what others feel; thus, for example, when being present at the anguish of the patient, many doctors and nurses feel distressed and, at the same time, enlightened, when the suffering of the patient is alleviated. The empathy in the amplest sense of the word supposes "to put itself in the place of the patients with cancer". Therefore, to approach its sufferings, Top of Form Fears, expectations, etc., does assume an undeniable psychological support in order to improve their quality of life and to face the disease and its possible recovery, far better than without doing that. The empathy is an attitude, a personal style, a communication ability that favors in its totality the development of positive interpersonal relationships. For that reason, the more we abound in the knowledge and practice, the more we shall advance in the establishment of a good aid to the each particular patient. Of this form we could be able to improve : psychological state (reduction of the tension, decrease of the fatigue and the confusion, increase of the vigor, decrease the significance of the pain and the depressive group of symptoms, etc.). Some very recent studies show that they have reached important improvements of some immunological parameters in the patients with cancer. This improvement of the immunological system is translated in a smaller tendency to the recidives and in a significant decrease of the mortality.

