Psychological aspects in cancer patients

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Why is this topic important?

Is there any evidence that psychological support is beneficial for the patient in extrem life threatening situations?
Yes, there is!

Health is a state of complete physical, mental and social well-being and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity.

WHO 1948
Dimensions of Psychological aspects

- Psychosocial conditions
- Quality of Life
- Treatment decision making process
- Coping strategies for patients and relatives
Psychosocial problems of cancer Patients

„psycho“
- Dealing with body symptoms (pain, fatigue)
- Psychological symptoms (fear, sadness, depression)
- Existential and spiritual problems

„social“
- Social alterations (considerible time of unemployability)
- Partnership and family problems
Dimensions of Psychological aspects

• Psychosocial conditions

• Quality of Life

• Treatment decision making process

• Coping strategies of patients and relatives
Quality of Life during sequential chemotherapy

Quality of Life and Sexuality of Patients after Treatment for gynaecological Malignancies

- According to the FSFI-d 78% of the pat. suffer from sexual Dysfunktion.

  Required no information 40%
  Asked the physician for informations 25%
  Information brochure 15%
  Asked the partner 5%
  Asked Friends 5%
  Searched in Internet for information 5%

Dimensions of psychological aspects

- Psychosocial conditions
- Quality of Life
- **Treatment decision making process**
- Coping strategies of patients and relatives
Treatment decision making process

- Literature research:
- Data basis: PubMed, Key words: ovarian Cancer, ovarian cancer treatment, treatment decision making process, publications within 1995-2011.

Luketina H, Fotopoulou C, Luketina RR, Pilger A, Sehouli J.
## Treatment decision making process

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Influencing factors on coping strategies

- Personality
- Experiences with illness
- Subjectiv conception
- Approach and prejudice about cancer
- Ressources (personal, network)
How can the physician support the patient

1. **Reduction of the thread:** education, explanation of the therapy process, improvement of the physician/patient relationship.

2. **Support in stress debriefing:** relaxing technique, psychological support.

3. **Stabilisation of a positive self-respect:** underlining the competences the patients have in spite of the cancer diagnose.
Summary

• Psychological stress is a frequent and relevant problem in cancer patients.

• Psychosocial stress reduces the quality of life and effects the history of the disease and the satisfaction about any medical treatment.

• Psychosocial distress should be treated professional.

• Psychological support is a crucial part of a multimodal management of cancer patients.