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Self care management for the patients with cancer

Gul Cankaya

NHS Marmara University Pendik Training Hospital, Turkey

Cancer is an important cause of mortality in all ages in population and is categorized as a chronic disease that is treatable in many situations, especially when diagnosed earlier. World Health Organization declared that (WHO, 2009): “Self-care is the ability of individuals, families and communities to promote health, prevent disease, and maintain health and to cope with illness and disability with or without the support of a healthcare provider”. Selfmanagement, however, outlines an interactive process where individual responses and behaviour focusing at managing physical and psychosocial consequences of symptoms and treatment. It has been reported that self care by patients diagnosed as cancer improves quality of life, symptom management, and patient satisfaction. Nurses are the members of treatment team against cancer. They have an important role during diagnosis, treatment, and caring. The patients feel better, physiologically and psychologically, when the symptoms managed effectively. Main symptoms are Fatigue, Eating problems, Nausea, Fever, Respiratory problems, Pain, Numbness in fingers and/or toes, Bleeding, Hair loss, Skin changes, Constipation, decreased interest in sexual activity. We have to build up specific self care programmes for each specific cancer, because symptoms differ widely between them. Breast cancer and prostate cancer will need much different self care programmes not because of the systems involving but the gender, age group matters.

Biography

Gul Cankaya is a surgical nurse at Marmara University Pendik Training Hospital in Istanbul. She has worked mostly in pediatric critical care unit, cardiovascular surgery operating room, general surgery operating room. She has attended international certification for breast cancer nursing programme (MEHEM). She has completed her thesis on “self care in breast cancer patients undergoing modified breast surgery”.

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