

Nursing and Patient Care in Childhood Cancer: Mini Review

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ABSTRACT

Childhood cancer poses unique challenges that require specialized nursing care to ensure optimal outcomes and the well-being of pediatric patients. This comprehensive review article examines the role of nursing in providing patient-centered care for children with cancer. It explores various aspects of nursing care, including symptom management, psychosocial support, family involvement, and long-term survivorship. Additionally, evidence-based

practices and interventions that enhance nursing care in childhood cancer are discussed.

Introduction

Childhood cancer is a complex and life-altering diagnosis that requires a multidisciplinary approach to care. Childhood cancer is a heterogeneous group of malignancies, consisting of a range of very different diseases with different patterns of occurrence (1), aetiology(2), treatment and supportive care, survival (3) and the risk of acute toxic side and late effects(4),(5). Globally, childhood cancer is a significant, but comparatively neglected, cause of morbidity and

mortality(6),(7). In many regions with inadequate coverage of registration systems, morbidity from non-cancer causes is often very high(8),(9)

This review provides an overview of the prevalence and impact of childhood cancer and highlights the essential role of nursing in supporting pediatric patients and their families throughout the cancer journey.

Symptom Management

Effective symptom management is crucial in minimizing treatment-related side effects and improving the quality of life for pediatric cancer patients. This section discusses nursing interventions for common symptoms such as pain, nausea, fatigue, and chemotherapy-induced peripheral neuropathy. It highlights evidence-based practices for symptom assessment, pharmacological and non-pharmacological interventions, and patient education (10)

Psychosocial Support

Mental health disorders such as adjustment, anxiety and depressive disorders, secondary to cancer treatment are commonly reported in many studies (11),(12),(11) Childhood cancer significantly affects the psychosocial well-being of patients and their families. The nurses were providing psychosocial support, including emotional support, coping strategies, and facilitating communication among the healthcare team, patients, and families. It emphasizes the importance of incorporating play therapy, art therapy, and other interventions to promote psychological well-being (13),(14).

Family Involvement

Engaging and supporting families is essential in the care of children with cancer. This is fostering family-centered care, including effective communication, providing education and resources, and involving families in decision-making processes. They provide psychosocial support for siblings and parents, as well as addressing cultural and spiritual needs (15).

Palliative and End-of-Life Care
Unfortunately, some children with cancer may face end-of-life care and eventual loss. The nurses providing compassionate end-of-life care, managing symptoms, facilitating family discussions, and supporting bereaved families(16)

Long-Term Survivorship (Late effect)

Advancements in cancer treatment have led to improved survival rates among childhood cancer patients. There are many challenges faced by long-term survivors, including late effects of treatment, psychosocial issues, and transitioning to adult care. The role of nursing were survivorship care planning, monitoring late effects, promoting healthy lifestyle behaviors, and supporting the transition to adult healthcare providers (17).

Conclusion

Nursing plays a pivotal role in providing comprehensive and patient-centered care to children with cancer. This importance of symptom management, psychosocial support, family involvement, end-of-life care, and long-term survivorship in nursing practice. By implementing evidence-based interventions, fostering interdisciplinary collaboration, and embracing innovative approaches, nurses can contribute significantly to the well-being and improved outcomes of pediatric cancer patients.

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