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Barriers and Facilitators to Self-Care Behavior Adherence in Patients with Autogenous Arteriovenous Fistula: A Qualitative Study

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Objectives : This study aimed to qualitatively explore the barriers and facilitators influencing self-care adherence among patients with autogenous arteriovenous fistulas (AVFs), to inform targeted interventions.
Methods : A descriptive qualitative design was employed. Using purposive sampling, 15 AVF patients from a tertiary hospital hemodialysis center were recruited for semi-structured interviews until data saturation. Interviews focused on self-care practices, challenges, and support. Data were analyzed using thematic analysis.
Results : Three core themes each for barriers and facilitators were identified. Barriers included: 1) Knowledge and skill dilemmas (fragmented knowledge, skill anxiety); 2) Contextual and psychological burden (fatigue, fear, stigma, exhaustion); 3) Environmental and support constraints (insufficient support, simplified healthcare communication, work/life restrictions). Facilitators included: 1) Positive cognition and beliefs (viewing AVF as a "lifeline," learning from past complications); 2) Effective support networks (personalized guidance, family assistance, peer sharing); 3) Adaptive strategies (routinizing care, using tools, proactive information-seeking).
Conclusions : Self-care adherence in AVF patients is influenced by a dynamic interplay of cognitive, psychological, social, and environmental factors. Moving beyond knowledge deficits, effective interventions should foster positive beliefs, strengthen multidimensional support systems, and promote personalized adaptive strategies.