Mini-Lecture 11

Experience of the Family Members of the Patient Under Hemodialysis

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The purpose of this study is to understand and describe the meaning of the experience of the family of a patient under the hemodialysis and to suggest a nursing method to help the family of the patient deal with the crisis and life changes caused by the dialysis treatment.

Methods is a qualitative study with a phenomenological research method. In depth interview is performed to collect data and information of the experience of the family members of the patients under the dialysis treatment.

Result : The experience of the patient's family may be classified into the following categories: Burden of the dialysis treatment, Fear of the chronic kidney disease, Ambivalence toward the patient, Acceptance of the dialysis treatment.

The family members of the patient are burdened with the physical, mental, and economical pressures caused by the long-term dialysis treatment and the chronic kidney disease. Ambivalence toward the patient can be found; On one side - despair, helplessness, bitterness, resentment and on the other gratitude and appreciation. The family members of the patient seem to accept the reality of the dialysis treatment as a part of their lives. Conclusion: It is confirmed again that nursing should include not only the physical aspect but also the psychological and social aspects of the patient, and at the same time should pay attention to the family members of the patient as well.

The crisis of the patient under the dialysis treatment is the crisis of the family as well, which may bring about a disastrous result. The illness of the patient could be worsened and the patient could fail to adjust to the life changes due to the dialysis treatment. A more careful and prudent attention to both the patient and the family is needed so that they may be more able to deal with the stresses caused by the illness and life changes. It might be even possible to improve the quality of their lives through caring and understanding by attending nurses. Social support is an essential factor to overcome the depression and the despair of the patient.