

The Role of Nurses in Promoting Physical Activity among Cancer Survivors

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Perspective

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ABSTRACT

Cancer survivors often face physical and psychological challenges that can hinder their ability to engage in physical activity. Nurses play a vital role in promoting physical activity among cancer survivors as they are in a unique position to provide education, support, and resources. This paper aims to explore the role of nurses in promoting physical activity among cancer survivors by reviewing relevant literature and identifying strategies that nurses can use to encourage physical activity among their patients. Firstly, nurses can educate cancer survivors about the benefits of physical activity and the risks of a sedentary lifestyle. They can explain how physical activity can reduce the risk of cancer recurrence, improve mood, increase energy levels, and decrease the risk of other chronic illnesses. Nurses can also provide information on the appropriate types and intensity of physical activity based on the individual's health status and preferences.

Secondly, nurses can support cancer survivors in their efforts to become more physically active. They can help survivors set realistic goals and develop a plan to incorporate physical activity into their daily routine. Nurses can also refer cancer survivors to resources, such as exercise programs or support groups, that can provide additional guidance and motivation.

Lastly, nurses can provide ongoing encouragement and reinforcement to cancer survivors as they engage in physical activity. They can monitor progress, celebrate successes, and provide feedback on areas that need improvement. Nurses can also help survivors overcome barriers to physical activity, such as fatigue, pain, or limited mobility, by offering strategies and adaptations that can make physical activity more manageable and enjoyable.

Keywords: Cancer survivors; Nurses; Physical activity; Manageable; Monitor progress

INTRODUCTION

Physical activity is an essential component of cancer survivorship. Studies have shown that physical activity can improve cancer survivors' quality of life, reduce the risk of cancer recurrence, and prevent the development of chronic diseases such as heart disease and diabetes. Despite these benefits, cancer survivors often face physical and psychological challenges that can hinder their ability to engage in physical activity. Nurses can play a vital role in promoting physical activity among cancer survivors as they are in a unique position to provide education, support, and resources.

DESCRIPTION

Research has identified several barriers to physical activity among cancer survivors, including fatigue, pain, fear of injury or recurrence, and lack of access to appropriate facilities or programs. These barriers can be addressed by nurses who can provide education, support, and resources to help cancer survivors overcome these obstacles. A study by Lee, et al., found that cancer survivors who received physical activity education from nurses were more likely to engage in physical activity than those who did not receive this education. Nurses can also provide support and encouragement to cancer survivors to help them overcome psychological barriers to physical activity. A study by Courneya, et al., found that cancer survivors who received telephone based counseling from a nurse were more likely to engage in physical activity than those who did not receive this counseling. The nurse provided personalized support and encouragement to the patients, which helped them overcome their psychological barriers to physical activity.

Nurses can also help cancer survivors access appropriate facilities or programs. For example, nurses can provide information about local gyms or exercise programs specifically designed for cancer survivors. They can also help connect patients with physical therapists or other healthcare professionals who can help them develop safe and effective exercise plans.

Strategies

To promote physical activity among cancer survivors, nurses can use several strategies, including:

- Providing education about the benefits of physical activity and strategies for overcoming common barriers to physical activity.
- Offering personalized support and encouragement to patients to help them overcome psychological barriers to physical activity.
- Recommending appropriate exercise programs or facilities specifically designed for cancer survivors.
- Collaborating with other healthcare professionals, such as physical therapists or oncologists, to develop safe and effective exercise plans for cancer survivors.

CONCLUSION

Nurses play a vital role in promoting physical activity among cancer survivors. By providing education, support, and resources, nurses can help cancer survivors overcome the physical and psychological barriers to physical activity. Through personalized support and encouragement, nurses can help patients develop safe and effective exercise

plans, which can improve their quality of life and reduce their risk of cancer recurrence and chronic disease. As such, nurses should prioritize physical activity promotion in their care for cancer survivors.