

COURSE TITLE: ADVANCED MEDICAL-SURGICAL NURSING

ASSIGNMENT TITLE: ONCOLOGY AND NURSING CARE OF PATIENTS WITH CANCER

COURSE CODE: NSC 408

MATRIC NO: 16/MHS02/039

Question 1

Discuss your nursing responsibilities towards a patient scheduled to receive neo-adjuvant treatment for the management of cancer.

Answer

Nursing responsibilities

A holistic care has to be performed for a patient undergoing neo-adjuvant treatment especially due to the fact that the patient is undergoing more than one treatment e.g. chemotherapy and radiotherapy

Some of the components to be considered during nursing care are:

1. Patient assessment
 - Monitor and assess vital signs
 - Monitor and assess patient's pain level using a standard 0 to 10 pain scale
 - Note the pain medication effective for pain relieve
 - Assess for constipation
 - Monitor bowel movement and use an effective bowel care protocol when needed
 - Assess and monitor patient's weight
 - Assess for neurologic impairment secondary
 - Assess fluid and electrolyte balance
 - Assess for anorexia, nausea, vomiting, and diarrhea
 - Assess for patient nutritional status
 - Assess skin for any signs of irritation secondary to radiation
 - Monitor and assess heart rate and blood level

2. Patient education

- Educate patient and their relatives on the treatment process
- Communicate frequently with patient and encourage them to ask questions
- Educate them on the importance of oral hygiene
- Educate them on the importance of intake of foods rich in proteins, fruits, vegetables, and grains
 - Advise them to avoid saturated fats, sugar, salt and alcohol
 - Encourage them to eat smaller meals more frequently
 - Advise patient not to eat undercooked or raw shell fish, sushi or undercooked eggs
- Encourage patient on the importance of taking plenty fluids to flush the remaining chemotherapeutic and radioactive materials from the body.

3. Patient support

- Ensure patient is not infected by encouraging the use of Personal Protective Equipment [PPE]
- Provide holistic, individualized care to the patients
- Place limit on the visitation hour to at least 30 minutes per day
- Establish nurse-patient relationship between the patient and family members to promote care
- Provide supportive care e.g. home visits
- Assess signs and symptoms of care givers e.g. nausea and vomiting

4. Patient counselling

- Promote hope among patients and family members
- Be truthful and non-judgmental in relation with patients and their family members
- Educate patient and relative on the continuity of care at home
- Prepare family members on the anticipated loss of their loved ones
- Counsel them on the importance of follow-up care

5. Patient physical care

- Use of Personal Protective Equipment [PPE] during the administration of therapies
- Since patients undergoing chemotherapy are usually immune-compromised, it is mandatory to ensure that the patient is not infected.

- The chemotherapeutics agents' works on fast growing cells like the mouth. The nurse must maintain the oral mucosa of the patient
 - Not using hard brush or abrasive brush for oral toileting
 - Maintain oral hygiene
- 6. Patient continuity of care
 - Follow up care
 - Home visits

Question 2

Discuss your nursing responsibilities towards a patient receiving radiotherapy on a an oncology unit where you practice

Answer

1. Patient Assessment
 - Monitor and assess vital signs
 - Monitor and assess patient's pain level using a standard 0 to 10 pain scale
 - Note the pain medication effective for pain relieve
 - Assess for constipation
 - Monitor bowel movement and use an effective bowel care protocol when needed
 - Monitor and assess for medication and drug interaction
2. Skin care

Radiation causes skin irritation causing the skin to redden or darken and blisters may develop

- Use of topical skin care products that hydrates the affected area
 - Educate patient not to administer product 2 hours before the radiation treatment to prevent skin exacerbation.
 - Teach patient how to administer and keep medications from treatment field to prevent radiation bolus
- Use of hydrogel pads
 - Reduces heat
 - Promotes comfort

- Encourage patients with a more severe skin irritation to visit radiation-care nurse to monitor skin healing and treatment of skin regimen
 - Radiation promotes alopecia, application of mineral oil to the affected area to reduce irritation
3. Nutrition and hydration
- Weigh patient weekly to prevent incidence of weight loss
 - Administration of gastrostomy tube for patients who have difficulty in swallowing
 - Administration of intravenous fluids to maintain hydration and prevent dehydration
 - Teach patients to report signs of dehydration, weakness and dizziness
 - Monitor intake and output chart
 - Assess for volume deficit
 - Document color of patient's urine
 - Serving food in an attractive manner to promote appetite
4. Emotional supports
- Provide education, encouragement, problem-solving help and provide assistance to patient and family members whenever it is required
 - Work in collaboration with pastoral staff, social services staff, and counselors in the care of the patients
 - Suggest patient use stress-relieving techniques such as meditation
 - Build nurse-patient relationship to promote treatment and make patient comfortable with treatment regimen

Others are:

- ❖ Perform hand hygiene and wear PPE
- ❖ Educate patient on the importance of wearing breathable cotton bra or camisole
- ❖ Advise patient to use deodorant and avoid shaving the armpit to prevent skin irritation
- ❖ Suggest oral mouthwash if patient complains of dry mouth
- ❖ Effective management of pain

Question 3

What precautions should you take while caring for a patient receiving chemotherapy on your unit?

Answer

1. Be familiar with institutional policies in regards to disposal of personal protective equipment
2. Put appropriate notice at the front door of the patient
3. Watch out for side effects and adverse reaction to chemotherapeutic drugs
4. Place limit to 30 minute per day to visitation. Don't allow children or pregnant mothers to visit
5. Practice safety precautions during therapies
6. Be present to provide factual information to patients and relatives
7. Be familiar with the management to accidental exposure to the chemotherapeutic agent
8. Ensure patient is not infected
9. Paste on the door of the patient "no visiting" so that visitors will know that they cannot visit at any time
10. Ensure the care givers are protected using personal protective equipment
11. Maintain distance with the patient while communicating and explain that it is for their safety
12. Be truthful and non-judgmental in the way you relate with your patient and family members
13. Establish nurse-patient relationship also with family members
14. Know where the chemotherapeutic agents are on the ward and know how to administer them