

Using Multi-Specialist Team to Care for a Breast Cancer Patient Who Received Total Mastectomy during Pregnancy

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Abstract : This paper discusses the experience of caring for a patient diagnosed with breast cancer and later received total mastectomy during a 2nd trimester pregnancy. She was hospitalized from January 31 to February 4, 2018. Using 'Gordon's 11 Functional Health Patterns' through physical exams and interviews, the researcher assessed the patient's physical and mental health and determined the patient to have anxiety, acute pain, and body image disturbance. After establishing a strong relationship with the patient, the researcher helped the patient express her anxiety and personal feelings. A multi-specialist team was formed to evaluate both the patient and her unborn child, before, during, and after surgery. This individualized care allowed the patient and her child to optimize the post-operative results. Aside from medication, the patient also received non-medicinal treatment, including improvement of sleep quality with body positioning, diaphragmatic breathing exercises for pain and stress relief after surgery. Throughout hospitalization, the patient's physical and emotional needs were addressed daily with listening sessions and empathy. The patient's husband was also incorporated in the patient's recovery by teaching both he and the patient how to change the sterile wound dressing, which may have the added benefit of improving marital relationships through shared activities of nurturing. The patient was also given advice about how to improve self-confidence through clothing. Lastly, the patient was encouraged to join a support group for breast cancer patients. Through the sharing of experience in groups and within the family, the patient was helped to adapt to the change of her appearance and re-establish her self-confidence. This level of care expedited the patient's return to her family life and role of being a mother.

Keywords : anxiety, body image disturbance, breast cancer during pregnancy, multi-specialist team

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