

Spirituality and Coping with Breast Cancer among Omani Women

Authors : Huda Al-Awisi, Mohammed Al-Azri, Samira Al-Rasbi, Mansour Al-Moundhri

Abstract : Cancer diagnosis is invariably a profound and catastrophic life-changing experience for individuals and their families. It has been found that cancer patients and survivors are distressed with the fragility of their life and their mortality. Based on the literature, cancer patients /survivors value their spiritual experience and connecting with unknown power either related to religious belief or not as an important coping mechanism. Health care professionals including nurses are expected to provide spiritual care for cancer patients as holistic care. Yet, nurses face many challenges in providing such care mainly due to lack of clear definition of spirituality. This study aims to explore coping mechanisms of Omani women diagnosed with breast cancer throughout their cancer journey including spirituality using a qualitative approach. A purposive sample of 19 Omani women diagnosed with breast cancer at different stages of cancer treatment modalities were interviewed. Interviews were tape recorded and transcribed verbatim. The framework approach was used to analyze the data. One main theme related to spirituality was identified and called "The power of faith". For the majority of participants, faith in God (the will of God) was most important in coping with all stages of their breast cancer experience. Some participants thought that the breast cancer is a test from God which they have to accept. Participants also expressed acceptance of death as the eventual end and reward from God. This belief gives them the strength to cope with cancer and seek medical treatment. In conclusion, women participated in this study believed faith in God imposed spiritual power for them to cope with cancer. They connected spirituality with religious beliefs. Therefore, regardless of nurses' faith in spirituality, the spiritual care needs to be tailored and provided according to each patient individual need.

Keywords : breast cancer, spiritual, religion, coping, diagnosis, oman, women

Conference Title : ICCNCC 2015 : International Conference on Cancer Nursing and Cancer Care

Conference Location : London, United Kingdom

Conference Dates : September 25-26, 2015