

The nursing experience of caring for a liver transplant recipient in a intensive care unit

Pei - Jung Chen

CHANGHUA CHRISTIAN HOSPITAL, Taiwan
Department of Nursing, Institute of Long Term Care, Chung Shan Medical University, Taiwan

Background

According to the World Health Organization, an estimated 820,000 people die each year. Chronic liver disease and cirrhosis are also among the top ten causes of death in Taiwan. With the improvement of surgical techniques and the development of immunosuppressants, the patient with metabolic liver disease, end-stage cirrhosis, and liver cancer, liver transplantation is the most effective treatment. According to statistics in Taiwan in February 2023, the liver donation rate is only 1.1%. However, in addition to the long waiting time for organs, the recipients also have to face acute care after surgery. This article describes a patient who underwent cadaveric liver transplantation. During the nursing period, it was found that the patient had acute pain problems due to wound pain and discomfort. The postoperative wound, various tubes on the body, and long-term use of anti-rejection drugs are potentially dangerous. The risk of sexual infection, in addition, the patient is temporarily notified that the organ matching is successful, and the patient is faced with uncertainty about prognosis and lack of postoperative self-care knowledge leading to extreme physical and mental stress for patients. The anxiety caused by the great pressure caused the author to discuss this patient in depth, hoping to provide a nursing care process as a reference for the future care of such patients.

Methods

To further investigate the postoperative issues of the patient, Gordon's Functional Health Patterns were applied for assessment, which collected the physical and mental health data of the patient from the aspect of both subjective and objective through the process of observations, interviews, and physical examinations. There were three main health issues were identified: postoperative pain, the risk for infection after liver transplant surgery, and anxiety. After the issues were identified, the individualized care plans were constructed multidisciplinary by the main caring nurses, nutritionists, and physicians. Risk for infection, in addition to implementing strict protective isolation measures, family members and patients are also educated about the signs of infection. To improve the overloading status of fluid, several nursing interventions were conducted, including the monitoring of electrolytes and fluid status, and education of appropriate diet ingestion. As to the acute postoperative wound pain, both medication and non-medication approaches were applied. For the anxious and disturbed mood, multiple nursing interventions were conducted, including encouragement of family member accompanies, the assistance of extremities massages, and explicating the purpose and process to the patient before nursing intervention. Through above mentioned nursing plans, the patient was successfully transferred to the ordinary ward. In our presented article, we aimed to share the nursing care experience of a liver transplant patient from the establishment of nursing plans to the implementation of nursing interventions.

Results

In addition to providing established clinical care, postoperative care requires the active provision of knowledge about liver transplantation to increase patient awareness of the disease. Through the cross-team nursing system, provide comprehensive consultation and nursing, improve the quality of postoperative care, learn nursing skills through nursing and joint participation, enhance the self-confidence of nursing staff, and reduce anxiety and tension. After being discharged from the hospital, the patients shared their experiences at the patient meeting. The patients supported and assisted each other, and solved the problems of body, mind, spirit, family, and society faced by long-term anti-cancer, to improve their life adaptation after treatment and promote their successful return to the hospital. society.

Conclusions

For such patients, liver transplantation is the patient's significant to the continuation of life, and it is also an important turning point in life. Through this nursing experience, the author realizes that the care of the nurses is not limited to the physical aspects, and the psychological problems are also the focus of care, to provide patients with complete and high-quality care and quality of life. By sharing this nursing experience, it will be used for future care of such patients. Patient reference.

