
Nursing Information 3

Nursing support for pain patients

IGAP

Institute for Innovations in Healthcare
and Applied Nursing Science

Dear reader,

Today, a good pain treatment is not standard!

The medical/nursing treatment of pain patients in Germany is unsatisfactory in most cases. The patients do have a life of suffering for 8-10 years, before getting the right and adequate treatment. This shows us very clearly, how insufficient the help is for pain patients. This is very remarkable, as we do have 8 Million people in Germany, who suffer from chronic or recurrent pain.

400 institutions and medical practices for pain treatment contrast with this large number. To ensure a sufficient and area- wide care in Germany, approx. 600 institutions and special departments for pain treatment are missing.

Types of pain:

- 30 % Back pain
- 20 % Nerve pain
- 20 % Rheumatism, Arthrosis
- 10 % Aftermath of accidents
- 10 % Tumor pain
- 10 % Abdomen / Digestive tract

1,3 Million patients should be treated with opioids, morphine or their synthetic descendants. Unfortunately, very often pain patients will be supplied with this drugs in an inadequate and insufficient way only. On one side there is the lack of knowledge of the therapeutical staff and on the other side, the patients' fear of becoming addicted to these drugs. The picture of the addicted "Junkie" is deep-seated in the patients' mind.

The affliction is unbearable for many patients. Approx. 2 million pain patients are generally known as chronically suicidal. Alarmingly, about 3000 people per year are committing suicide because of their insufferable situation.

How can nurses support in a sensible way ?

Most important prerequisite: The pain patient is the specialist and the only authority with regard to the existence and kind of pain, as he is the only one, who can feel and evaluate the pain. Therefore, nurses and therapists should be open for everything, that may control the pain and consider everything, that may be effective for the treatment in the opinion of the pain patient. Nurses can advise and inform these patients and support and accompany them during treatment.

Nurses should:

- Carry out a careful pain anamnesis
- Observe the patient very closely
- Observe the effect of medicaments very carefully
- Evaluate and document the conditions of pain (i.e. with the IGAP scale, which you can order free of charge)
- Take seriously the pain of the patient
- Support the patient in keeping a pain-diary

Besides the medical treatment, the following measures to relieve pain, should be offered:

- The Cutaneous Stimulation
 - Treatment with ice
 - Massages of body, hands and feet
 - Pain treatment through heat and/or cold
 - Vibrations
- Not-invasive measures for relief pain
 - Progressive relaxation of muscle tension
 - Meditation
 - Imagination
 - Relaxation
- Choice of caring aids
 - Chairs, car seats, armchairs
 - Mattresses and positioning systems, i.e. Micro-Stimulation-Systems®, which have proven to be fully satisfactory in daily practice.

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