



The Importance of Sibling Relationships in Pediatric Oncology/Stem Cell Transplant Patients

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Background

Pediatric oncology nurses utilize the importance of sibling relationships in the care of a child with a cancer diagnosis to improve quality of life and happiness

Given the better quality of life, the need for the sibling of a pediatric oncology patient is essential

This project aims to: explore the importance of sibling relationships, discuss how nursing roles can utilize sibling relationships, and describe ways to implement sibling-specific practices in pediatric oncology.

Significance

Sibling relationships are crucial in pediatric oncology touching on emotional, psychological, and social aspects especially, in an inpatient setting

Siblings play a crucial role in improving quality of life by creating a sense of normalcy within the family

What do siblings provide?: United familial front, normalcy without being at home, emotional reassurance etc.

Clinical Question

In inpatient pediatric oncology patients, does frequent sibling communication in comparison to infrequent communication improve quality life and happiness of the sick child?

Findings

Title of Article	Author (s)/Years of Publication	Type of Research	Major Findings	Implications for clinical practice
Sibling Supporters' Experiences of Giving Support to Siblings Who Have a Brother or a Sister With Cancer	Nolbris, M. J., & Nilsson, S. (2017)	Qualitative descriptive study using interviews	<p>Whatever affects one sibling also affects the others in the family.</p> <p>The sibling supporters reminded them about the siblings;... it was "important that the sibling supporters worked with staff on the wards."</p> <p>Sibling supporters adapted their working hours to support the siblings during the terminal period until death and afterward.</p>	<p>The study confirms that sibling supporters should be a part of the health care team that treat and support the family when a child has cancer.</p> <p>The study demonstrates that sibling supporters are a helpful part of the health care team that treats and supports the family when a child has cancer.</p>
The information needs of relatives of childhood cancer patients and survivors: A systematic review of qualitative evidence	Ilic, A., Sievers, Y., Roser, K., Scheinemann, K., & Michel, G. (2023)	Systematic review using qualitative research	<p>Siblings are also profoundly affected by the disease and are often closely involved in their sibling's care.</p> <p>Siblings also suggested that activities could be used while talking about difficult things, rather than just sitting down and talking."</p> <p>Many of the children had siblings who also needed their parents to explain the situation concerning their brother or sister.</p>	Caregivers and siblings have unique but similar information needs regarding childhood cancer.
'It can be difficult to find the right words': Parents' needs when breaking news and communicating to children with cancer and their siblings	Kenny, M., Duffy, K., Hilliard, C., O'Rourke, M., Fortune, G., Smith, O., Hynes, G., & Higgins, A. (2021)	Qualitative survey	<p>Parents identified four interventions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Resources (paper and electronic) - Therapeutic support - Coaching for parent-sibling conversations, - Standardized family meeting(s) with the multi-disciplinary team that includes siblings <p>Parents need direction about ways to anticipate and meet siblings' needs, especially when siblings are unable to visit the hospital regularly</p>	Providers need guidance on how to direct parents on the anticipatory needs of siblings

Discussion

Siblings should be apart of the child's care team and want to be involved in cares as well

Healthcare workers knowing this information could increase more encouragement for the patient and family when talking about sibling relationships

Siblings expresses the need to be present for multi-disciplinary team rounds

Limitations to this study included family conflict (divorced/separated parents), few qualitative questions asked, voice of the child absent (interviewing both parents and children), child's intellectual level etc.

Recommendation

Encourage siblings of childhood cancer to visit and spend time with the patient, utilizing the technique of distraction

Continuity of: BEADS program at BCH, including siblings in daily cares and discussions, creating a special day for the doner of stem cells

Encourage and support siblings emotionally as they visit the patient



References
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