

Subjective well-being measures of hemodialysis patients

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Hemodialysis is associated with well-known stress factors. Survival among hemodialysis patients is stationary and quality of life has been converted to the main outcome. How patients perceive their lives and are affected by the dialysis cannot be revealed by traditional objective measures like physical signs and laboratory and radiological data. Subjective measures concerning depressive feelings, quality of life, ways of coping to stressors, sexuality and spirituality have to be used in clinical practice by professionals involved in caring for hemodialysis patients, to make the dialysis more effective. Although, the use of quality of life scores is not widespread and the majority of professionals caring for hemodialysis patients do not know how to use subjective measures in their practice. Quality of life scores work as a final and summarised measure because they show how the patient's daily activities, physical and mental functioning and interpersonal relations are affected by their kidney disease and its treatment. There are many reports of poor quality of life among hemodialysis patients, but information on interventions to improve life quality is lacking in the literature. Objective measures to control clinical status are already used in all renal units, and are not able to change the actual status of low quality of life among hemodialysis patients. I propose, based on personal studies, that subjective measures, mainly depression and coping style, and their association with quality of life can be the key for more successful interventions.

Biography

Paulo Roberto Santos, MD, PhD, graduated from the School of Medicine of the Fluminense Federal University, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil. He spent three years on medical residency in the area of nephrology at Servidores Hospital, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil. In the end of his medical residency, he was invited to coordinate the renal unit of Santa Casa de Sobral Hospital, located in the city of Sobral, northeastern Brazil, where he also began to teach at the local School of Medicine of Ceara Federal University. His research focus is on psychological aspects of dialysis and indicators of mortality among dialysis patients.

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