

Nursing Care Plan for US Patients with Obesity

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Obesity is a disorder observed among children and adults almost equally. Nowadays, approximately one-third of the US population has serious obesity problems (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 2017). It is characterized by an excessive fat accumulation in a human body with a number of adverse health effects (Shen & Maitin, 2014). The peculiar feature of this disorder is its recognitions as an outcome of certain psychological and physiological problems at the same time. On the one hand, specific physical exercises and changes are required to be treated for obesity. On the other hand, this disorder treatment should be based on the discussion of personal and psychological problems that could lead to such weight changes. The role of nurses in treating obesity is integral because these workers are able to recognize new symptoms, choose appropriate help, inform a doctor, or, at least, support a patient. In this paper, a nursing care plan for obesity that is caused by imbalanced nutrition will be developed to provide nurses with a guide on what they should know about obesity and how they should help obese or overweight patients.

Obesity Profile

Obesity is defined as a serious and complex disorder rather than another cosmetic concern people should take care of. It is the condition when an over-accumulation of subcutaneous adipose tissue is observed (Lee, Lee, & Choue, 2013). There are many health risks including the development of new diseases such as diabetes, hypertension, and heart problems. As a rule, people are considered as obese in case their body mass index is more than 30. There are several categories of obesity among US patients: underweight people have a BMI 18.5 and lower, class I obesity is for patients with a BMI 30-35, class II includes people with a BMI 35-40, and those patients with a BMI more than 40 belong to class III obesity (Dickerson, 2014).

Normal weight for US people is a BMI between 18.5 and 25 (Dickerson, 2014). To calculate a BMI means to divide patient's weight (kg) by patient's height squared (m²). As soon as a person has some changes in a BMI, it is high time to visit a doctor.

Patients have to be taught about what may cause obesity. In some cases, obesity is a genetic disease, and patients have to follow ordinary hygiene and diet rules to avoid serious complications. Still, it is also necessary to admit the possibility to hormonal and behavioral reasons. For example, pregnant women may suffer from obesity after giving birth to a baby due to a number of extra hormones left in a body or the necessity to take more calories than usual. Inactivity is a behavioral cause of obesity. If people neglect simple physical exercises, follow a sedentary lifestyle, and develop bad eating habits, they are under a threat of being overweight or obese.

According to Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (2017), such social groups as non-Hispanic blacks, Hispanic, and non-Hispanic whites have the highest rates of obesity. Middle age (40-59 years) and old age (over 60 years) are the periods when obesity can be a threat and develops fast. Besides, men with high incomes are more likely to have problems with their weight. As for American women, the situation is quite the opposite: low-income women are under threat to have obesity in comparison to women with higher incomes.

Role of Nurses

Nurses are medical workers who play a key role in obesity treatment. Though obesity is a concern that has been bothering the US population during the last three decades, its growth cannot be neglected. The investigations of professional research organizations and centers predict that the level of obesity can dramatically increase by 2050. The spread of such health problems like hypertension, high cholesterol levels, stress, sleep disorder, infertility, and cancer

caused by obesity is a concern for many US nurses. Though nurses can make primary diagnoses and establish a treatment, they can demonstrate their support, follow special nursing care plans, and find solutions to patients' psychological problems. Doctors have to investigate blood test results, pay attention to the patient's BMI, and discover the patient's medical history. Nurses can assist doctors in communicating with patients and completing the tasks which can fasten examination processes.

As mentioned above, obesity may have different causes, and the task of a nurse is to give an appropriate nursing diagnosis. There are many forms of nursing diagnosis for obesity. They are imbalanced nutrition caused by wrong food intake, some psychological reasons, or even a social status, impaired social interactions with self-concept disturbance as the leading factor, knowledge deficit when patients do not actually know what causes obesity or misunderstand the symptoms. Anyway, each nursing diagnosis is based on a combination of factors and facts mentioned by a patient and obtained from a physical examination that occurs as soon as patients address a hospital with their problems.

In comparison to doctors who work with dry facts, laboratory test results, and patients' complaints, nurses are able to make their own observations and follow the development of the disease making notes changes. Then, nurses inform doctors (usually physicians, nutritionists, or endocrinologists) and discuss possible improvements to the already established treatment. Besides, nursing care for children, adults, and older adults with obesity has to be different, including the peculiarities of possible psychological and physiological problems (Ogden et al., 2014). It is not an easy task for any patient to stop eating too much in case years have been spent according to a certain lifestyle. Nurses have to comprehend such details and develop their care to support, as well as to educate patients on how to accept their new styles of life with no obesity

problems (Siegel et al., 2014). A good plan for nursing care that can be offered to patients with obesity is the best solution in such cases for nurses and patients.

Nursing Care Plan

In this paper, a nursing care plan will be developed for a patient with imbalanced nutrition as the main nursing diagnosis. Subjective data usually given by patients include some behavioral changes, stomach problems, and the inability to complete the same duties that have been done some time ago. Objective data contain an increased BMI, a constant feeling of hunger, and impressive food storage. Planning is based on the necessity to develop certain nursing interventions, invite family members to support a patient, and change a lifestyle.

Several nursing interventions can be offered. First, the investigation of eating habits of a patient and their family is required. Second, BMI changes should be observed. Then, a certain attention should be paid to patient education about obesity, its consequences, and the possibility to change human lives. Finally, support and understanding are expected from nurses who work with obese or overweight people. Rationales for such interventions are as follows: nurses can learn nutritional details of a patient and their family, new food and diets can be developed, dietary changes may be a new type of journey for all family members, but not another challenge to deal with. Besides, a satisfaction of emotional and personal needs of patients is possible with the help of nursing care.

Obesity is a serious health problem, and patients may not find an effective solution to their disease in a short run. However, the recognition of all nursing interventions, the intentions to learn and use knowledge and the attempt to follow professional medical workers' pieces of advice should be a good starting point. Regarding the offered nursing interventions, it is also expected that all family members support a patient. A patient feels discomfort less when it is

time to change a lifestyle. A patient and their family are ready to deal with obesity and aware of obesity risks, complications, and outcomes.

Conclusion

In general, today, obesity is a disorder that can be treated. Nurses have to comprehend their roles and the level of support they can provide their patients and families with. It is not enough to identify a problem and find a solution. It is necessary to think about patients, their possibilities, and expectations. Nurses are important for patients diagnosed as obese or overweight. The development of an effective nursing care plan is one of the main steps to be taken as early as possible to achieve positive results in treating obesity.

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