

ATTITUDE OF PATIENTS WITH TUBERCULOSIS TOWARD DISEASE AND TREATMENT

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Abstract

Aim: to study the attitude of patients with tuberculosis (TB) toward disease and treatment.

Materials and methods. Anonymous questioning of 490 patients with TB grouped by case category (new, repeated treatment, multiple-resistant TB) and phase of treatment (intensive or maintenance phase, hospital or out-patient). Statistical analysis of the results was performed.

Results. Majority of study participants were aware about TB, duration of its treatment and commonly used antituberculosis drugs (ATD). But 1/3 of patients was not informed on possible side effects of ATD. Many patients trusted their physician, had good relationships with medical personnel. They were sure about the cure and readily accepted ATD treatment, confirmed a support of relatives and friends. However, many patients were depressed due to the longevity of treatment (59,8 %), 31,8 % had doubts regarding convalescence, 56,5 % needed psychological support. 55,9 % of hospital patients wished to receive an out-patient care. 1/3 of hospital patients were unsatisfied by the conditions of the facilities. 14,4 % of patients anticipated the changes in organization of out-patient treatment. The considerable worsening of quality of life was noted in 59,2 % of patients: 70,0 % of these patients considered this was due to financial burden, 54,8 % — poor physical condition, 46,6 % — the change of lifestyles, 12,8 % — emotional suffering. 63,3 % of interviewed patients considered that there was a “brand of TB patient” in society: 1/2 of patients felt this on their own, 59,0 % concealed the fact of the illness.

Patients with multiple-resistant TB had less support from relatives and friends, less trusted their physician, needed more psychological support. They were less sure in convalescence and more frustrated by the long treatment. They wanted to be treated as out-patients; felt the worsening of quality of life and bad attitude from the society.

Conclusions. Questioning of TB patients has revealed the following: lack of knowledges about possible side effects of ATD, need for shorter duration of therapy, better hospital treatment conditions or opportunity to get treatment at home, doubts in convalescence and necessity for psychological support, need for better quality of life (financial and emotional condition, lifestyles), possibility not to conceal the illness because of negative attitude in society and need to improve the conditions of treatment. It was proved the necessity for improvement of patients' awareness about TB course and treatment, provision of psychological support (especially in resistant TB), improvement of hospital and out-patient care (considering patient's expectations and epidemic safety), elucidative work with their nearest surroundings and creation of such informative environment in society, which would overcome negative attitude toward with TB patients. Findings are important for the improvement of organization of treatment and achievement of better treatment adherence of the patients, and can positively influence overall treatment effectiveness.

Key words: tuberculosis, disease, treatment, questioning.

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