

Nutrition and Spirituality: Essential Dimensions in Cancer Patient Treatment

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Submitted: 28 feb 2023

Revised: 3 marzo 2023

Accepted: 19 marzo 2023

Published: 8 agosto 2023

Resumen

No existe división entre la nutrición y la espiritualidad. La espiritualidad, así como la nutrición, están cimentadas en los elementos prácticos de la vida, no solo teorías y conceptos. La espiritualidad, como la nutrición, son elementos esenciales de la vida. Luchar batallas espirituales puede ser un aspecto importante en la vida del paciente con cáncer. La dieta también juega un papel importante en su tratamiento, ya que afecta la tolerancia, resultados y calidad de vida y tratamiento. Sin embargo, los oncólogos aun no focalizan en la nutrición dado que el adiestramiento inadecuado sobre los asuntos nutricionales. De otra parte, la introducción de la neuroteología, como una rama única de las ciencias y la investigación, dirigida a comprender la relación entre el cerebro y la teología, ha ayudado a los pacientes de cáncer asentirse bendecidos por Dios. Sin embargo, más investigación y profesionales de la medicina deben involucrarse en la nutrición, la espiritualidad, la neuroteología en general y la neuroteología cristiana.

Abstract

There is no line between nutrition and spirituality. Spirituality, like nutrition, is rooted in the essential elements of life. Fighting spiritual warfare can be an important aspect in a cancer patient's life. Diet also plays an important role in the treatment. It affects tolerability, outcome, and quality of life and treatment. However, oncologists still do not focus on nutrition due to inadequate training on nutritional issues. On the other hand, the introduction of neurotheology as a unique branch of science and research aimed at understanding the relationship between the brain and theology has been found to help cancer patients feel more blessed by God. However, more research and medical professionals need to be involved in nutrition, spirituality neurotheology in general and Christian neurotheology. We discuss the importance of this correlation between them.

Palabras clave: Nutrición, Espiritualidad, Cáncer, Neuroteología, Neuroteología Cristiana, Bienestar

Keywords. Nutrition, Spirituality, Cancer, Neurotheology, Christian Neurotheology, Wellness



Cancer is an intricate disease understood as the outcome of multiple interactions between genes and environment and is regarded as one of the leading causes of global mortality (Fearon, Barber, et al. 2001; Mattox, 2021). A study exploring what cancer patients and their family members define as wellness, as well as the needs to support it during the cancer experience indicate that cancer wellness models should consider the personal nature of wellness in relation to the six domains of wellness mapped in relation to Hettler's six (6) dimensions of wellness (Nixon, Chan, et al., 2021).

According to Hettler (1976), Wellness is a holistic and multidimensional state that guides the individual's attain full potential. Wellness behaviors within six (6) dimensions of wellness are associated with protection of cognitive functions as adults age (Strout, 2012). To achieve wellness individuals must be able to fulfill physical, psychological, social, spiritual, and economic needs, as well as to attain role expectations of family, community, and other places of connection (Smith, Tang, et al., 2006).

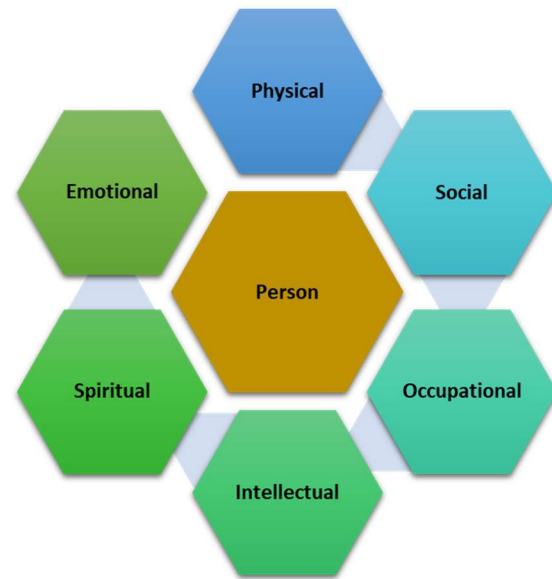
According to Hettler (1980) wellness embraces diverse dimensions that are presented below.

1. Emotional Dimension — the understanding and acceptance of the person's own feelings and degree of positivity about life
2. Intellectual Dimension — the level of engagement with stimulating activities and the development knowledge and skills
3. Occupational Dimension — the person's level of satisfaction regarding his/her job
4. Physical Dimension — the extent to which the individual person looks after their health (e.g. cardiovascular

health) and is mindful of following a healthy diet (nutrition)

5. Social Dimension — the individual's contribution to the community
6. Spiritual Dimension — the individual's awareness of life, as well as the purpose of the human experience

Diagram. *The Six Dimensions of Wellness*



Nutrition and Spirituality

Nutrition is the science and practice of meeting the nutritional needs of the body, the process of providing the body with the nourishment it needs to build tissue and capacity and to promote regeneration and growth. We all have bodies, so we need physical nutrition (MasamiCovey, 2016). Spirituality, on the other hand, refers to a person's subjective relationship (cognitive, emotional, intuitive) to things that cannot be known about existence, and how a person relates that relationship to the universe, the world, others, self, morality. It refers to how one transforms one's perspective on values, and the integration of one's own meaning (Senreich, 2013).

Spirituality has emerged as a new field of study in many different branches of knowledge, but it is a subject so subjective and controversial that it has so often failed to come to fruition academically. Like food, it is deeply embedded in the practical aspects of life, not just in theory or concept. From this perspective, the common research field of food and spirituality promises fertile ground for new knowledge for both scholars and practitioners. It is to summarize the currently available literature on the psychological aspects of food consumption to provide a definition that will ultimately be useful for future research (Michopoulou & Jauniškis, 2020).

Spirituality plays an important role in the lives of most cancer patients, whether it is formally true about a particular religion or belief. As a result, oncologists and palliative care teams are called upon to help families who are near death and who struggle to find meaning in life amid health crises. Fighting spiritual warfare can be an important aspect in a cancer patient's life. The Bible does not specifically say anything about cancer. Liberation is the key and God is said to be different because whoever believes in him is working for him as a servant of God. Experience. Spirituality and healing are important aspects of cancer patient care. More models and programs are needed to integrate counseling with cancer patients.

Neurotheology is an interdisciplinary field that links it to religious and spiritual phenomena (Newberg, 2010). According to Zeiders (2008), neurotheology is a new science that studies how states of the brain and nervous system evoke, correlate, and influence our understanding of religious experience. New instruments can be used to explore our body and how it responds to different kinds of religious experiences. It is an emerging science that studies the results

of insights and connections between new insights into the human brain emerging from neuroscience (Colón Santiago, 2021).

On the other hand, diet plays an important role in cancer treatment. It affects tolerability, outcome, and quality of life of treatment. However, nutrition is still not a focus among oncologists because of under-education and underestimated importance of nutrition issues in graduate and graduate education. Therefore, the consequences of diseases such as anorexia, sarcopenia, cachexia, and their treatment still exist (Liposits, Orrevall, et al., 2021).

Many Christians and people from diverse believe are battling Cancer and there is a chaotic vortex of emotions and nutritional deficits that need resolving. They think they are alone. Religion and spirituality are fundamental to the human condition and play a role in our mental health and wellbeing. Initially, religion and science thrived in a complimentary relationship, only to be polarized with the aggressive secularization of science. Nutrition and Spirituality are great needs for them. We know that with the introduction of Neurotheology as a unique field of scholarship and investigations that seeks to understand the relationship specifically between the brain and theology, the cancer patients will feel more the Grace of God (Morales-Borges, 2021). More investigations and healthcare professionals need to be involved in Nutrition, Spirituality, and Christian Neuro Theology. I will discuss the importance of that correlation between them.

Quality of Life in Cancer Patient

In a study conducted by Lewandowska, Rudzki, et al. (2020) 800 (n=800) patients in Poland, 38% were shocked by the diagnosis,

37% could not believe the diagnosis, 22% fainted at the news, and 3% were helpless. bottom. 48% sought help from a psychologist and 10% sought help from a psychiatrist during their illness. Women sought professional help from a psychologist or psychiatrist much more often than men and received support from their children. The difference was statistically significant. Thus, although there is evidence that cancer patients need help and seek help from psychiatrists, this need is still unmet, and their quality of life is diminished. Many publications have been published on this over the years (Bottomley, 2002; Calman, 1984; Cella & Cherin, 1988;) but the application of the knowledge gained over time is still lacking.

Lifestyle

Mental health professionals vastly underestimate the importance of lifestyle factors in (a) the causes and treatments of multiple mental illnesses, (b) promoting individual and social well-being, and (c) maintaining and optimizing cognitive function. As a result, therapeutic lifestyle modification (TLC) is underutilized, despite substantial evidence that it is effective in both clinical and normal populations (Walsh, 2011). TLC can be as effective as psychotherapy or drug therapy and has great therapeutic benefit. Important TLCs include exercise, nutrition and diet, time in nature, relationships, rest, relaxation, and stress management, religious or spiritual engagement, and service to others.

Nutrition & Spirituality

Nutrition and diet plays an important role in maintaining the health of the body. Food and drink have a special place in many

cultures, including Islamic teachings and traditional Persian medicine. Traditional Persian medicine is a holistic medicine, paying close attention not only to the physical aspects of maintaining human health, but also to the spiritual aspects of life (Nimrouzi & Zare, 2014). From this perspective, people do not eat and drink for pleasure, but maintain a good life and physical health through daily household chores and pay attention to the moral aspects and spiritual satisfaction of human life. I encouraged them to imitate their work, especially with our oncology patients. Nutritional support clinicians can add another dimension to their practice by incorporating patient-centered care and clinical ethics (Schwartz, 2013). This represents a cultural shift among healthcare professionals, including nutritionists, patients, and their families. All these individuals are involved in this process and can modify the current healthcare system to improve communication and to foster change through humanized nutrition support practices. Nutrition support is a life-sustaining medicine. The use of this therapy requires nutritional support physician knowledge of patient-centered care concepts, preventative clinical ethics, religious/spirituality and cultural diversity, and the role of the palliative care team. Integrating these into nutritional support practices is an innovative approach, leading to a changing culture of care and new knowledge that requires the involvement and empowerment of patients and their families in the process. This is not just a health issue. This includes a social/family conversation exercise enhanced by the participation of a nutritionist.

From May to September 2011, a cross-sectional questionnaire was distributed to

176 (n=176) adult cancer patients undergoing chemotherapy at an outpatient clinic in rural Japan (Kamijo & Miyamura, 2020). They investigated the mentality of patients undergoing cancer chemotherapy, the relationship between mentality and physical pain, and the relationship between mentality and quality of life (QOL). Spirituality was strongly associated with his quality of life. Young patients (under 50) and stage I cancer patients need additional support to meet their emotional needs. To maintain the mental well-being of cancer patients, nursing interventions should promote patient nutritional support and appropriately address patient mentality.

Integration of both Nutrition and Spirituality from Neurotheology perspective

Development is the functional expression of lifelong complex brain processes, whether motor, linguistic, social, or mental. and the effects of surgery were measured using neuroimaging and developmental assessment tools. Andrew Newberg (2021) and his group suggested that mental development may be significantly impaired in children with tumor conditions that affect underlying brain processes. Science & spirituality, combining medicine can better address the mental needs of children as they deal with oncological conditions by alleviating emotional, cognitive, and physical symptoms and improving outcomes. I proposed this for adult oncology patients (8). The basic functions of thought are the mental processes that help us perceive and understand the world around us, process information, and make decisions (González Pecotche, 2012). Thinking functions are innate or inherent cognitive and intellectual

abilities that are acquired through actual home, school, and social learning activities. They are the mental processes that help us know and understand the world around us, process information, make judgments, make decisions, and communicate our knowledge to others.

Thoughts are in the brain. The brain is part of the body and is the physical foundation of all human spiritual activity. "Spirit: It is the function of this brain, the activity that produces perception, imagination, knowledge and emotion. A big question about the mind is whether, it can reduce all its activity to a tangle of neural exchanges at the brain level (Arroyo, 2014). According to A. Newberg (2016) the brains of monks who have been accustomed to meditation for years have less neuronal aging, greater memory capacity and storage, and better resistance to pain. The so-called "mental brain" is the origin of much of the current research. It is not about "seeking God" in your head, nor is it about condoning or criticizing the practice of any kind of religion or doctrine. This science seeks to understand how spirituality itself affects our minds and physical and emotional health (Sabater, 2022). Dr. Hector D. Colón Santiago (2022) wrote a description of the human brain as the organ responsible for spiritual processes from the point of view of Christianity. What is processed and processed is what God relates to us.

Conclusions

The oncology field needs to be updated in this third millennium we are living in with the purpose of integrate nutrition, spirituality, Christian neurotheology and neurotheology in general to improve the quality of life of our cancer patients. These two domains are

essential in treating cancer patients, and their families as part of a holistic view of the human being and clinical practice. Additionally, more professionals and investigators are needed and, also the academy must invest in research and education particularly in the healthcare fields.

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