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Psychology and Mental Health Promotion of Patients with Type 2 Diabetes

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Abstract

Considering psychological aspects in prevention and treatment of diabetes, especially Type 2 diabetes, has gained attention of diabetes specialists and psychiatrists over the decades. Updated technology of treatment of diabetes could not solve the diabetes problem by itself. Education and psycho-social healthcare, empowerment of self-care patients and clearing the psychological barriers seem essential to achieve desired medical and psycho-social outcomes. In this study, some solutions are provided for empowerment of patients in individual care and effective interventions to promote the mental health of the patients. Psychological aspects of diabetes in empowerment of patients and the medical considerations could be significantly effective in consultation and psychotherapy and excess blood sugar in patients with diabetes could be decreased considerably through controlling and managing the stress and anger.

Keywords: diabetes, stress, psychological, mental health, anger

Introduction

Diabetes is a metabolic disorder in the body. In this disease, the ability to produce insulin in body is destroyed or the body becomes resistant to insulin and hence, the produced insulin could not take normal function. In type 2 diabetes, it is clear that genetic factors, obesity and inactivity play key role in the disease. In the initial stages, diabetes may have no symptom. Many patients are identified accidently in an examination or while screening. With the increased blood sugar, symptoms of diabetes are cleared. Polyuria, polydipsia, weight loss despite increased appetite, fatigue and blurred vision are the initial common symptoms of diabetes. In children with type 1 diabetes, the symptoms are usually appeared suddenly. These people have been health before and have had no overweight. In adults, these symptoms are usually appeared gradually (1).

Theoretical framework and method

The theoretical framework of personality in Islam and comparing it with theoretical framework of personality psychology is also presented. Hence, the achievements and uses of each of them are expressed for recognition of human separately. The method applied in this study is based on descriptive researches

and in kind of documentary study with reliance on library sources. The data collected from books, religion and psychological studies have analyzed selected texts with the help of content analysis (2). In a study, the effectiveness of relaxation on reduction of anger and control of blood sugar in patients with type 1 and 2 diabetes is investigated. After training, mean blood sugar and anger was reduced significantly in both groups of patients with diabetes under intervention (3). In another study, the effect of teaching anger management using cognitive-behavioral approach on general health o patients with diabetes type 2 was analyzed and it was found that teaching anger management with cognitive-behavioral approach could be effective in improving the general health of patients with diabetes type 2. Therefore, such interventions, along with other medical interventions, are advised as a part of comprehensive care and treatment of diabetes (4). In a study, the relationship between perceived stress and attribution styles with quality of life in patients with diabetes is analyzed. The results showed that there is significant and negative correlation between positive external attributions and stability attribution style and it is in negative correlation with quality of life and positive correlation with positive perception of stress, pleasant event attribution style and total value of event. Moreover, the results showed that role of positive perceptions of stress could predict changes in quality of life (5).

Stress, one of the main issues in field of psychology

On the other hand, stress is one of the most common phenomena in today's life, so that the evidences show that about 80% of current problems are rooted in stress (6). Stress is one of the most important threatening factors of mental health, which could make problem for personal life in each stage of life. Stress is one of the main issues in field of health psychology, which analyzes the correlations between cognitive factors, prevention and treatment of physical disorders. Dadsetan (6) mentions that there are different patterns for potential determination of role of stress in etiology, exacerbation, recurrence and chronic nature of mental and physical diseases. In the first approach, stress is considered as a stimulant. In this definition, stress is something imposed from outside on the person and people considerate as the source or reason of their own tensions. In second approach, stress is considered as a response showing personal reactions to stressful events. The response has two interrelated components: psychological component encompassing behavior, thinking patterns and emotions and physiological components referring to increase in physical arousal, heart rate, blood pressure, respiratory rate and similar issues. Some people have special personality traits and the traits could be a source for creating stress in them. Stress could significantly make people, especially women, expose to risk of heart attack, hypertension, depression, and physical pains and especially type2 diabetes (7).

Mental disorders affecting patients with diabetes

Perception of pathology and treatment of diabetes since past 30 years has been changed from a simplistic and reductionistic bio-medical attitude to a complicated mental-social-biological symptom today. This model, along with individual biology (genetic and physiological readiness) encompasses psychological factors and especially cognitive processes and their interactions (8).

Stress control and management

Haszanzadeh M, the psychological expert, says in an interview with Jam-e Jam Newspaper: a weak pressure and stress is needed for working and management of daily and routine problems and challenges; although if the pressure is high or long-term, physical organism is destroyed and it is emerged in form of mental pressures caused by stress. On the other hand, investigations have shown that majority of people with stress are the patients with heart diseases and diabetes; although through controlling and management of stress, the excess blood sugar could be reduced significantly in patients with diabetes.

Stress and high blood sugar

The Endocrinologists emphasize that high stress could lead to secretion of various hormones in the body and some of these hormones increase blood sugar. High blood sugar for any reason could damage some body organs. Hence, the specialists always advise the patients with diabetes to maintain their blood sugar in low level and reduce stresses of their work and life, since one way to regulate blood sugar is removal of stress. Even in some cases, anti-stress medicines are prescribed for patients with diabetes. Stress with any origin (e.g. social or financial problems, family history of anxiety, fatigue or hard working, occurrence of stressful situations or the events, in which person has been damaged, physical disorders, unreasonable evolution seeking and addiction treatment) could accelerate the risk of emergence of anxiety (9).

What kind of activities could be taken by patients with diabetes?

Aerobic exercises such as swimming, walking
Scheduled practices
Homework
Gardening (working at the home yard)
Social activities
Do not take physical activities or exercises, which are hard to do.

At the beginning, the shorter the time of exercise is, the better it could be for the health (a few minutes). Many people with large size could also do some exercises or all exercises given in this work. To do the exercises, no special skill or equipment is needed. This work has discussed on both type of exercises (exercises needing weight tolerance and with no need to weight tolerance). Exercises needing weight tolerance include walking, football and so on; exercises with no need to weight tolerance include swimming, which could reduce the pressure from joints. If a person suffers from joint disorders, this kind of exercise could be useful (ibid).

Reduce speed in life

According to Hassanzadeh, the most important solution to reduce and control stress is identification of risky lifestyle, in which majority of people are involved. It means that the feeding pattern, activity and social and emotional relations are formed based on accelerated behaviors without relaxation. Adds Hassanzadeh: "those who eat fast, talk fast, walk fast and even have family, marital and social relationships out of calm space are exposed to cardiovascular diseases, diabetes, migraine and backache more than others". Accordingly, the best and the most effective advice for these people could be reducing speed of their daily affairs and activities and especially mouth activities. Hence, people could gain the power of discharging daily stresses after eating food in calmness, after exercising and saying prayers, taking family relations in calm environment and sleeping in comfort and calmness. Hence, the stresses accumulated in person are appeared in form of various diseases. Undoubtedly, diabetes and stress could affect each other and the first solution to fight against stress is management and control of stressful factors, which could be learnt using psychological consultants and relevant books. Moreover, exercise, in addition to play key role in controlling stress, could help fixing blood sugar and reducing need to medicine and insulin. However, it would be better for patients with diabetes to have regular visits with doctor and nutritionist and to have plans and futurism to prevent progress of the disease (10).

Definition of personality

Lexically, personality is "personalities" is Latin and is called "personality" in Anglo-Saxon language and is rooted in the Latin word "persona" (12). This word refers to the mask used by artists in theater. Persona (mask) refers to the physical appearance of people show to surrounding environment. Therefore, according to the origin of personality, personality refers to the physical and visible traits of people; although it doesn't just refer to the mask on the face and the role people play. When talking of personality,

various traits of person and generality of various traits going beyond physical traits are considered. This term encompasses lots of mental and emotional traits; and the traits, which may not be tangible and may be hidden by the person (13). Personality has been defined based on clear or dominant trait of person and accordingly, people are considered in groups of extroverted or introverted or aggressive personality. In fact, it is assumed that under different conditions, the explicit mode could be aggressive or introverted state. Such perception of personality is encompassed in field of typology (12).

Anger and diabetes

One of the psychological disorders recognized as an important issue in patients with diabetes in previous qualitative literature is anger. Although a few studies have been conducted in this field till now (14), as diabetes is a disease that is managed usually by the person, anger could be a barrier to self-management of diabetes and lack of controlling it could lead to lack of controlling blood sugar and short-term and long-term complications of diabetes and disorder in general health of patients (15).

Psychodynamic approach

In view of Freud, human psych or personality is like a large piece of polar ice, which only a small part of it is visible and this part forms the conscious level. The unconscious level is a world of suppressed desires, tendencies, motivations and beliefs, which are not cleared to people. In fact, the main determinant of human behavior is same unconscious factor formed of 3 main parts: id, ego and superego. The 3 basic elements of personality could always affect each other; although they are different in terms of structure, action, components and dynamicity. According to Freud, behavior or psych or the personality of human is always the product of the interaction of these elements (ibid). Id: Freud believed that id is a part of human personality born with the human. The innate basis of the said structure is in the instincts with biological origin. Two other parts of personality could be finally caused by Id. Id encompasses all biological and psychological energies. Hence, Id is the origin and source of all motivations and is absolutely unconscious (16). Id acts based on principle of enjoyment; meaning getting joy and avoiding suffer. Hence, id has tendency for complete and urgent satisfaction. Id can't tolerate disappointment and is free from concepts. It pays no attention to reality and could achieve satisfaction through action or with the imagination and obtain what it wants (17). Ego: the first process of Id could not reduce the tension and stresses by itself. In other words, needs could not be met just by imagination.

Today, every person experiences stress in daily life in special way and tries to make unique way to show response to these factors. Stress or tension is special force applied on object and could make temporary or permanent changes in its structure (18).

Depression and diabetes

Diabetes is one of the metabolic disorders in the body with two main types. With emergence of symptoms and complications of diabetes in the patient, the person may feel failure and helplessness and the probability of depression is increased. Studies have shown that the risk of depression in patients with diabetes is more than people of the society. Therefore, treatment of depression is one of the priorities for these patients, since quality of these patients could be increased with reduction of depression (19).

Social approach

In social approach, mental states and anxiety are not considered as a health problem or disorder, buts also these states are considered as the product of inability of individuals for effective coping with the mental pressures. In this attitude, inconsistent behavior is not considered as personal problem, but also it could be at least considered as failure of social system supporting the person such as wife and husband, parents, sister, brother, relatives, friends, teachers and head (20).

Principle of trust and believe in it

Another useful ways to overcome mental pressures and stresses is believe in trust (Trust in God), which is formed in human based on trust in divine predestination and the Unity of Divine Acts. The trust is trust in God and means that humans should be affected by no insecurity in way of God and should not just rely on own destination and believe that if a good decision based on order of God is selected in life and leave the outcome to God, the Almighty God supports them. Hence, not only the mental pressures and stresses could not affect humans, but also divine destiny are considered by them in their affairs and they would be considered as a kind of benevolence of God and he says every moment: " I entrust my affair to Allah . Indeed, Allah is Seeing of [His] servants". Hence, it should be noted that trust doesn't mean that people should just watch and refer everything to this principle, since everyone takes benefit equal to the efforts taken and it is true that human is free; although the power and freedom in nature and history is in way of Divine Religion and the religion and rite is unchangeable (21).

Conclusion

Psychologists play valuable role in helping people to have good life and to cope with diabetes. Diabetes could make abundant challenges for the patients and people around them. The psychologists have been well-trained to make behavioral changes and psychological interventions. They understand the problems related to self-care in patients with diabetes. Hence, they could help the patients to overcome problems and make their desired behavioral changes.

In addition to behavioral issues, emotional and social disorders are also among challenges created for patients with diabetes. Patients with diabetes seem sometimes too exhausted and disappointed and coping with the disease, sense of depression (inability against problems and being failed), anxiety (fear of complications of disease and reduced blood sugar) and burnout (through self-care challenges and problems imposed by treatment system) as common factor in this disease may be unbearable. Although it is not possible to eliminate stresses completely, they could be reduced and controlled, since it has been proved that the ruling features of life and the personality of people with stress is not based on genetic and is depended on learning and the environment. The factors affecting blood sugar control in patients with diabetes include diet, physical activity and on-time intake of medicines and reducing stresses. However, further studies are needed to investigate the direct effect of psychological factors on blood sugar control accurately.

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