
Postgraduate Certificate in Psycho-Oncology

Psycho-Oncology: Theory and Research

****Bereavement****

: The state of having lost someone close through death, often accompanied by grief and mourning. In psycho-oncology, bereavement refers to the emotional response experienced by family members or friends after the death of a loved one with cancer.

Related terms: Grief, Mourning, Palliative care

Concept: Bereavement is a natural process that occurs in response to the death of a significant other. It involves a range of emotional, cognitive, and behavioral reactions that can vary widely among individuals. Psycho-oncology research focuses on understanding the bereavement process in the context of cancer and developing interventions to support those who are grieving.

****Cancer-related Fatigue (CRF)****

: A persistent sense of physical, emotional, and/or cognitive exhaustion that is directly related to cancer or its treatment. CRF is different from general fatigue and can significantly impact a person's daily functioning and quality of life.

Related terms: Fatigue, Quality of life, Cancer treatment

Concept: CRF is a common side effect of cancer and its treatment, affecting up to 90% of patients. It can persist for months or even years after treatment ends, impacting patients' ability to perform daily activities, maintain social relationships, and engage in meaningful work. Psycho-oncology research focuses on understanding the underlying mechanisms of CRF and developing effective interventions to manage this symptom.

****Caregiver Burden****

: The physical, emotional, and financial strain experienced by individuals who provide care for someone with cancer. Caregiver burden can negatively impact the caregiver's quality of life and lead to feelings of stress, anxiety, and depression.

Related terms: Caregiving, Quality of life, Psychological distress

Concept: Caregiver burden is a common experience for individuals who care for a loved one with cancer. Psycho-oncology research focuses on understanding the factors that contribute to caregiver burden, identifying interventions to reduce this burden, and promoting the well-being of both the patient and the caregiver.

****Cognitive-Behavioral Therapy (CBT)****

: A type of psychotherapy that focuses on modifying negative thought patterns and behaviors to improve emotional well-being. CBT has been shown to be effective in managing symptoms of anxiety, depression, and distress in individuals with cancer.

Related terms: Psychotherapy, Anxiety, Depression

Concept: CBT is a well-established treatment approach in psycho-oncology. It involves identifying negative thought patterns and behaviors, challenging these thoughts, and developing more adaptive ways of thinking and behaving. CBT can be delivered individually or in group settings and has been shown to improve psychological well-being in individuals with cancer.

****Communication****

: The exchange of information, thoughts, and ideas between individuals, including patients, families, and healthcare providers. Effective communication is critical in psycho-oncology to ensure that patients receive the support and care they need.

Related terms: Patient-provider communication, Disclosure, Breaking bad news

Concept: Communication in psycho-oncology involves a range of skills, including active listening, empathy, and clear and concise language. Effective communication can improve patient satisfaction, adherence to treatment, and psychological well-being.

****Depression****

: A mood disorder characterized by persistent feelings of sadness, hopelessness, and loss of interest in activities. Depression is common in individuals with cancer and can significantly impact quality of life.

Related terms: Mood disorder, Anhedonia, Psychiatric comorbidity

Concept: Depression is a common psychological symptom in individuals with cancer, affecting up to 25% of patients. It can lead to decreased treatment adherence, poorer quality of life, and increased mortality. Psycho-oncology research focuses on understanding the factors that contribute to depression in cancer and developing effective interventions to manage this symptom.

****Disclosure****

: The act of revealing information about one's cancer diagnosis, treatment, or prognosis to others. Disclosure can have significant emotional and social implications for patients and their families.

Related terms: Breaking bad news, Communication, Social support

Concept: Disclosure is a critical aspect of psycho-oncology, as it can impact patients' psychological well-being, social relationships, and treatment adherence. Research in this area focuses on understanding the factors that influence disclosure decisions, developing effective communication strategies for breaking bad news, and promoting patient-centered disclosure practices.

****Distress****

: A state of emotional suffering, characterized by anxiety, depression, or sadness, that can interfere with an individual's ability to cope with cancer and its treatment. Distress is a common experience in individuals with cancer and can significantly impact quality of life.

Related terms: Anxiety, Depression, Quality of life

Concept: Distress is a multifaceted construct that can manifest in a range of emotional, cognitive, and behavioral symptoms. Psycho-oncology research focuses on understanding the factors that contribute to distress in cancer and developing effective interventions to manage this symptom.

****End-of-Life Care****

: The care provided to individuals with advanced cancer who are nearing the end of their lives. End-of-life care focuses on managing symptoms, promoting comfort, and supporting patients and their families through the dying process.

Related terms: Palliative care, Hospice care, Symptom management

Concept: End-of-life care is a critical aspect of psycho-oncology, as it can significantly impact patients' quality of life and the well-being of their families. Research in this area focuses on understanding the needs of patients and families at the end of life, developing effective symptom management strategies, and promoting patient-centered care.

****Existential Distress****

: A sense of meaninglessness, hopelessness, or despair that can arise in response to a cancer diagnosis or treatment. Existential distress is a common experience in individuals with cancer and can significantly impact quality of life.

Related terms: Meaning-making, Spirituality, Quality of life

Concept: Existential distress is a unique aspect of psycho-oncology, as it involves questions about the meaning and purpose of life. Research in this area focuses on understanding the factors that contribute to existential distress in cancer, developing interventions to promote meaning-making and spirituality, and promoting patient-centered care.

****Fatigue****

: A subjective feeling of physical, emotional, and/or cognitive exhaustion that can interfere with daily activities and quality of life. Fatigue is a common symptom in individuals with cancer and can be caused by a range of factors, including cancer treatment, anemia, and psychological distress.

Related terms: Cancer-related fatigue, Anemia, Psychological distress

Concept: Fatigue is a common and distressing symptom in individuals with cancer, affecting up to 90% of patients. It can significantly impact patients' ability to perform daily activities, maintain social relationships, and engage in meaningful work. Psycho-oncology research focuses on understanding the underlying mechanisms of fatigue and developing effective interventions to manage this symptom.

****Grief****

: The emotional response to the loss of a loved one, characterized by feelings of sadness, anger, and disbelief. Grief is a natural process that occurs in response to bereavement and can vary widely among individuals.

Related terms: Bereavement, Mourning, Palliative care

Concept: Grief is a complex and multifaceted process that can involve a range of emotional, cognitive, and behavioral reactions. Psycho-oncology research focuses on understanding the grief process in the context of cancer and developing interventions to support those who are grieving.

****Hope****

: A positive expectation for the future, even in the face of adversity or uncertainty. Hope is an important factor in psycho-oncology, as it can promote resilience, well-being, and engagement in treatment.

Related terms: Resilience, Well-being, Treatment engagement

Concept: Hope is a critical aspect of psycho-oncology, as it can significantly impact patients' psychological well-being and treatment outcomes. Research in this area focuses on understanding the factors that contribute to hope in cancer, developing interventions to promote hope, and promoting patient-centered care.

****Insomnia****

: A sleep disorder characterized by difficulty falling or staying asleep, resulting in impaired daytime functioning. Insomnia is a common symptom in individuals with cancer and can significantly impact quality of life.

Related terms: Sleep disturbance, Fatigue, Quality of life

Concept: Insomnia is a