

Oncology

The branch of medicine dealing with tumors



Personal Attitudes


- **Feared and dreaded disease because:**
 - may present in advanced stage with no symptoms
 - vigorous, disfiguring tx doesn't guarantee cure
 - may recur after many years of remission
 - healthy life-style doesn't ensure escape
- **Can affect pt. at all levels of functioning**
 - intellectual
 - self-concept breadwinner may become dependent
 - may become more dependent
 - changes in body image
- **Impacts the entire family**
 - period of diagnosis and initial treatment
 - If it's considered curable- survivorship ensues
 - watchful waiting for recurrence
 - if metastatic then chronicity of the disease ensues



Risk Factors

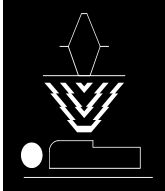
- **Bladder-** white, aniline dye, paint, coal, tar, asbestos, textiles.
- **Colon-** ulcerative colitis, sedentary, aging, familial .
- **Gastric-** nonwhite, familial, gastrectomy, A blood, ulcers, polyps.
- **Leukemia-** child, acute, old age, chronic, Downs, viruses, genetic, benzene, poultry farmer, explosives or rubber cement worker, radiologist, distiller, dye user, painter, radium miner, chemist.
- **Lung-** familial, environmental pollution, radon in home, smoking.
- **Skin-** familial melanoma, fair skin/hair, age, organ transplant, burns, topical ulcers, scars from previous skin cancers
- **Breast-** familial esp. maternal before menopause, benign breast disease, early menarche or late menopause, birth of 1st child after age 30, nulliparity, Jewish, white, single, high socioeconomic, age.
- **Prostate-** black, age, exposure to cadmium, hx venereal disease, possibly sexual activity.

Cancer Treatments



- Surgery to diagnose, stage, tx, palliation, and prevention.
- Tumors probably shed cells into systemic circulation throughout their growth.
- Local therapies, surgery, chemo, radiation, and biotherapy usually combined to improve survival.

Radiation Therapy



- >60% of CA pts. Receive it
- Primary, adjuvant, or palliative.
- Rapidly dividing cells more vulnerable
- Destroys cell's reproductive ability.
- Normal cells repair easier than cancer.
- Side effects- mild-erythema to second-degree burn, fatigue, nausea, anorexia.
- Site-specific- mucositis, caries, esophagitis, dysphagia, tenesmus, cystitis, urethritis, alopecia, bone marrow depression.

Skin Care within the treatment field

- Keep skin dry. Don't wash skin until Dr. orders it.
- Then wash with mild soap, rinse, pat dry with warm or cool water. NO hot water.
- Don't remove lines or ink marks, no tape on skin.
- Avoid powders, lotions, creams, alcohol deodorants.
- Wear loose-fitting clothing
- Use an electric razor, no pre-shave or after shave.
- Protect skin from sun, chlorinated pools.

Radiation Safety for the Caregiver three key principles

- Distance- the greater the distance from the radiation source, the less the exposure.
- Time- Limited to 30 min of direct care per 8 hrs
- Shielding- the dose of rays is reduced as the thickness of lead shield is increased, cumbersome.
- Film badges- required

Chemotherapy repeated doses must be given

- Cells actively dividing are more sensitive
- To control or eradicate all malignant cells.
- Combinations of medications far superior.
- **Side effects-** N/V, anemia, thrombocytopenia, neutropenia, diarrhea, constipation, anorexia, esophagitis, wt. Loss, pharyngitis, stomatitis, perianal ulcers, photosensitivity, nail changes, urine color change, cystitis, cirrhosis, amenorrhea, sterility, loss of libido, impotence, gynecomastia, arrhythmias, pneumonitis, hearing loss, neuropathy.



Contaminated disposable items sealed in bags in hazardous waste.

Safety

- May be carcinogenic
- Excreta/body fluids flushed x2
- Wear gloves when handling body secretions, even 48 hrs. after tx.
- Flush toilet twice x 48 hrs after tx
- Spills- follow facility policy- wear protective gown, gloves, goggles. Wipe with absorbent towels, then wash 3x with detergent.
- Pregnant pt. Shouldn't share BR
- Linen/ trash containers in room.

Nursing Care of client receiving Chemo

- Report immediately c/o pain
- Observe for s/s infection, report temp >100
- Maintain adequate nutritional/fluid intake.
- Report any unusual bleeding/bruising, visual disturbances, other side effects.
- Gentle and thorough oral hygiene
- Report immediately if infusion site looks infected, infiltrated, leaking, ect.

Biologic Response Modifiers

- Boosts immune system
- Attacks tumor cells directly
- Most biologic agents are still under investigation.
- Understand important side effects- hypotension, ascites, pulmonary edema, weight gain, rash, pruritis, flu-like symptoms, tachycardia, rarely hypertension.
