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The Importance of Bedside Manner in Nursing

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Summary:

The quality of the care you provide to your patients is important for them in so many ways. Of course you need to maintain a certain level of professionalism with patients, visitors, and the medical professionals you work with. But overlooking the importance of bedside manner in nursing reduces the quality of the care that you have taken an oath to provide to the patients under your care.

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Article Body:

The quality of the care you provide to your patients is important for them in so many ways. Of course you need to maintain a certain level of professionalism with patients, visitors, and the medical professionals you work with. But overlooking the importance of bedside manner in nursing reduces the quality of the care that you have taken an oath to provide to the patients under your care.

Doctors are often more focused on the conditions and symptoms that patients are suffering from and finding the appropriate course of treatment for those symptoms and conditions. Due to this situation, their genuine concern for patents is not always conveyed. This can result in patients not feeling as if they can or should discuss symptoms they are experiencing, possible questions they have, and the fears they are keeping to themselves with the doctor. Many people feel more comfortable sharing this information with a nurse who has a friendly bedside manner. Therefore it is vital that you remember the importance of having a good, friendly bedside manner. You may often be the only bridge between the doctors getting the information needed to treat the patient better, and a patient understanding that not fully disclosing these things can seriously affect the outcome of their treatment.

For patients suffering from serious illnesses or injuries, the level of bedside manner provided by the nursing professionals caring for them, often takes on a greater significance. Your beside manner is integral to the recovery process of your patients. Think about it from the standpoint of the patient. Coping with an illness or injury and the treatment they must undergo for recovery is a time filled with fear and stress. They may also be dealing with symptoms such as pain, shock, confusion, nausea, light headedness, stiffness, lessened or complete loss of mobility, and sleep and appetite changes. The level of fear and stress is often heightened when a patient is hospitalized for treatment. The unfamiliar settings of a hospital can be very distressing to patients who are stressed because they are sick, injured, or having surgery.

Treatments can be uncomfortable or even painful. Patients may perceive their conditions to be worse than they are and their prognosis dismal, and may keep these feelings to themselves. Patients can easily become overwhelmed by the fear and stress they are feeling and not hear or understand what the doctor is telling them about their condition, the recommended treatment, and the risks involved. This will increase a patient's level of fear and stress which can worsen their condition and make it harder to treat them successfully. Family and friends may also increase a patient's level of fear and stress. They are themselves confused and scared because their loved one is ill or injured. Without meaning to, they may transfer their fears, confusion, and stress onto the patient whose body is already struggling under the weight of a medical condition. In these situations, the importance of bedside manner in nursing cannot be overstated. Displaying a calm, friendly demeanor to patients and their families can reassure them and reduce their fears and stress.

Some people don't have family or friends who can visit them while they are in the hospital. This can lead to a patient feeling lonely, sad, and isolated or cut off from the people and surroundings they know and their normal lives. This can cause appetitive and sleep difficulties and even reduce the effectiveness of pain medications for the patient feeling as if they are all alone. Taking the time to talk to patients and asking them questions helps them to feel that they are not alone. This also conveys to them that you care not just about doing your job to the best of your ability: but also about them. Knowing that someone cares can very often help further the recovery process even when present treatments do not seem to be working, or working fast enough.

But even when the condition is a terminal illness or disease such as Cancer and the prognosis is not a positive one, bedside manner is important for helping those patients to be as comfortable and at peace as possible. Your bedside manner will also mean a great deal to the family members who must come to grips with seeing a loved one so seriously ill and knowing the end is drawing near. This is probably the hardest part of nursing. But there is nothing nobler than ensuring that a person is given dignity, comfort, respect, and compassionate care as they transition away from this life.

Your bedside manner is important to the patients you care for in so many ways as a nursing professional. Never underestimate the power of a good bedside manner. Take steps so you do not forsake the oath you have taken to provide quality care to your patients. Remember the importance of bedside manner in nursing.