**FAMILY AND PATIENT CARE IN DISTRESS.**

1.Cognitive and emotional signs of distress.

Distress is extreme sorrow,pain or anxiety.

Emotional distress is a state of mental anguish.

Stress is a normal reaction to environmental or internal perturbations where as distress occurs when stress is severe or prolonged.

1.Cognitive symptoms of stress.

* Constant worrying
* Racing thoughts
* Forgetfulness and disorganization
* Inability to focus
* Poor judgement
* Being pessimistic

2.Emotional symptoms of stress

* Feeling overwhelmed,helpless or hopeless
* Feeling guilty without a clear cause
* Spending a lot of time worrying
* Having changes in appetite
* Sleeping too much or too little
* Relying heavily on mood altering substances such as alcohol.

**Behavioural signs**

Can be non-verbal facial expressions and body postures.

Verval responses can involve self denial or complaints.

Symptoms

* More use of alcohol,drugs or cigarettes
* Having more nervous behaviours such as fidgeting, pacing and nail biting
* Procrastinating
* Changes in appetite
* Gambling
* Participating compassively (uncontrolled) in sex,shopping e.t.c

**Conclusion**

Stress is subjective (not measurable with tests), therefore questionnaires can be used to understand one's stress and how it affects their life.For example,a patient with chronic stress,the health care provider can evaluate the symptoms that result from the stress,for example,high blood pressure can be diagnosed and treated.

**Physical signs of distress**

* Headaches
* Dizziness
* Increased heart rate or chest pains
* Low or no energy
* Pulling away from people and things
* Shortness of breath
* Thinking of hurting or killing yourself or someone else

Conclusion

Stress is a normal reaction to environmental or internal perturbations but distress occurs when distress is severe or prolonged.

**Academic signs**

* Prolonged feelings of despair and unhappiness
* Withdrawal from normal activities and interests
* Excessive anxiety
* Physical complaints with no medical cause
* Physical pain with no medical cause
* Decreased ability to function or concentrate academically
* Withdrawal from others especially over group discussion.

**Signs of acute distress**

* Breathing difficulties
* Chest pains
* Palpitations--thumping heart
* Headaches
* Abdominal pains

***What to do in case of acute distress***

*Acute distress* is an emotional form of mental illness that comes after the occurrence of a certain event.

**Management of acute distress**

* Encouraging self care with practical support
* Seeking counselling
* Medication;that is,psychological therapy
* Managing acute respiratory distress in case of occurrence:this may involve prone positioning to improve lung volume
* Offering corticosteroids to decrease lung inflammation.

**Psychological symptoms**

* Withdrawal from others
* Poor concentration
* Lack of sleep
* Anxiety
* Low moods

**Symptoms of intense physical distress**

* Inability of experiencing positivity
* Alterial sense of reality
* Memory loss
* Efforts to avoid distracting memories
* Efforts to avoid external reminders
* Insomnia
* Feeling of possibility of danger
* Difficulty in concentration
* Exaggerated response to loud noises

*Treatment*

* Seek for counseling
* Involving oneself in various activities

**Signs of anxiety**

* Feeling nervous or restless or tense
* Having sense of impending danger,panic or doom
* Having an increased heart rate
* Breathing rapidly
* Sweating
* Trembling
* Feeling weak or tired
* Poor concentration or thinking about any other thing than the present worry

*What to do in case of anxiety*

*1.Self treatment*

*2.Treatment from others*

*3.Seeking professional or medical attention*

*4.Taking part in physical activity*

***1.Self treatment***

* Taking part in physical activities
* Regular sleep
* Relaxation exercises
* Balancing between work or study and enjoyment
* Avoiding alcohol and coffee
* Avoiding stress inducing areas
* Breathing techniques,for example the 4,7,8 system

***2.Treatment from others***

* Joining support groups
* Spending time with friends and family

***3.Professional medical attention***

* One session therapy
* Constant therapy
* Prescription medications such as benzodiazepine which improves mood.

**Suicidal thoughts**

This refers to thinking about or planning suicide

**Signs of suicidal thoughts**

* Talking about dying or wanting to die
* Talking about feeling empty or hopeless
* Mentioning strong feelings of guilt and shame
* Talking about not having a reason to live
* Social withdrawal and isolation from others
* Giving away personal items to your friends and neighbours
* Saying goodbye to friends and family

*What to do in case of suicidal ideation*

* Seeking therapy
* Taking antidepressants
* Seeking help from family and friends
* Staying connected with others
* Promotion of a sense of self esteem
* Promotion of access to health care facilities
* Taking preventional drugs
* Eating a balanced diet

**~~THANK YOU~~**

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