QUESTION

How do I encourage physical activity and health promotion behaviors when providing culturally sensitive care to cancer survivors?

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For my research, I interviewed two adults with multiple myeloma to better understand their physical activity and health promotion behaviors, as well as their potential barriers to activity. These two participants identify as Black and considering that multiple myeloma is a disease that is more common in individuals who are Black, it was important for me to hear from multiple myeloma survivors in this population. Three main themes emerged from these brief interviews: (a) a diagnosis of multiple myeloma leads to changes in individuals’ physical abilities and lifestyles over time, (b) physical activity is made more challenging because of the long-term effects of multiple myeloma, and (c) physical activity may not be considered to be a top personal priority among individuals with multiple myeloma. As a young White and Hispanic woman, I learned from the experiences of these two Black cancer survivors during our brief interview. Learning to see and value other individuals’ perspectives, experiences, and wishes is essential to the application of culturally sensitive care. Healthcare providers must continue to listen and learn from others to ensure that all patients are supported and provided the best care. This openness and willingness to learn from others fosters respect and understanding, which enhances the nurse–patient relationship and helps to ensure that patient care overall is individualized.

As I leap into my first oncology nursing position, I will care for survivors and their families who are diverse in race, ethnicity, gender, and socioeconomic status. To ensure equitable care of cancer survivors, future studies can include participants who are racially, ethnically, and socioeconomically diverse.

KEYWORDS
multiple myeloma; cancer survivors; oncology nursing; mentorship; student nurse

RESOURCES

- Authority in Ethical, Responsible Clinical Research
  Offers information on reaching under-represented populations in research
  https://bit.ly/3mHZFCS

- EveryNurse
  Provides actionable steps that can be taken to provide culturally sensitive care

- International Myeloma Foundation’s African American Initiative
  Aims to increase awareness and improve short- and long-term outcomes in this patient population
  https://bit.ly/3mHPOwy

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