



Emergence of the butterfly: The life experiences of type 1 diabetes patients during the 16–25-year-old transitional period in Taiwan



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Background: Type 1 diabetes (T1D) occurs mostly in children and adolescents. The control of disease has been getting worse during the transition phase of adolescents to young adults. It is one of the most pressure during the late adolescent to young adulthood because they face the variety of career development. It will impact the result of disease control by the stress and personal capability to face the challenge. We are lacking the concerning research in domestic study in Taiwan.

Purpose: To explore the transitional life experiences of patients with type 1 diabetes in age 16-25 years old in Taiwan.

Method: A descriptive phenomenological design was used. Fourteen adolescents with T1D were individually interviewed using a semi-structured interview. Interviews were transcribed and non-verbal communication recorded within 24 hours of the interview. Transcriptions were analyzed and perceptions and attitudes grouped according to theme expressed.

Results: The results of the study showed that T1D patients during the transitional period between 16–25 years of age experience a metamorphosis from awareness of responsibility to figuring out a way to care for themselves. We identified **six themes**: **(1) Hibernation**: Awareness of Responsibility, **(2) Emergence**: Attempts to Take Responsibility, **(3) Perseverance**: Encountering Difficulties, **(4) Anxiety**: Multiple Worries, **(5) Hesitation**: Back and Forth, and **(6) Exit**: Finding a Way Out.” All patients looked forward to controlling the disease regardless of whether they were able to take responsibility for healthy self-management at this stage, and they even hoped to turn around the challenges of disease control and take ownership of their disease. Like a butterfly who emerges, they hoped to overcome the dangers of taking flight through trials and navigating the world.

Conclusion: Due to the differences in culture and parenting style, in Taiwan, patients with type 1 diabetes still cannot fully bear the responsibilities of disease self-management even at early adulthood. Moreover, attention should be paid to the situation where the patients used negative strategies to face stress. The results of this study may be used as clinical care guidelines for patients with type 1 diabetes in age 16-25 years old and provide a reference for developing transitional intervention strategies that meet cultural needs.

Keywords: Type 1 Diabetes, Transition, life experiences.

Abstract summary :

The purpose of this study was to explore the transitional life experiences of patients with type 1 diabetes on age 16-25 years old. Including 6 themes: hibernation, emergence, perseverance, anxiety, hesitation, exit. The results are offered as a reference for the empirical guidelines of clinical care.

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