

Creating Healthy Work Environments VIRTUAL 2021

Fertility Preservation Discussions in Adolescent and Young Adult Oncology Patients

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Purpose:

The survivability of adolescent and young adult cancer diagnoses has improved greatly. As this population is undergoing great physiological development, these treatments have implications for future fertility. Oncological treatments have shown predisposition to infertility due to the use of gonadotoxic agents. Currently, the discussion of fertility preservation in this population is left up to the discretion of care providers and some patients go through treatment without being educated on the treatments available to address treatment-induced infertility. The aim of this study is to examine the effects of discussing fertility preservation on adolescent and young adult oncology patients and their families.

Methods:

A critical appraisal of the literature was conducted. Literature that included family and patient-centered discussion of fertility preservation in the adolescent and young adult population. Research was graded for impact on the field using LEGEND criteria. Key findings were synthesized and presented with weighted recommendation for change in clinical practice.

Results:

The results of this study indicated that high regret was associated with patients who did not discuss fertility preservation. These results indicated that fertility preservation is a sensitive topic during a tumultuous time in the patients' and their families' lives and needs to be addressed with greater sensitivity. Additionally, greater standardization and facilitation of these discussions need to be done at a systematic level in order to assure access to fertility preservation for AYA oncology patients regardless of insurance status. Furthermore, nurses are in the perfect role to support these discussion through providing knowledge-based and emotional support during the decision-making process as an advocate for the patient and a helpful voice for the care team.

Conclusion:

In the end, these discussions should be further standardized amongst all adolescent and young adult oncology patients and the care teams should go under sensitivity training in order to address the patients and their families with more sensitivity during this difficult time.

Title:

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Keywords:

Adolescent and Young Adult, Care Planning and Oncology

Abstract Summary:

This review looks into the impact fertility preservation discussions with the adult and young adult oncology population. While fertility preserving methods are ethically controversial, it is important to leave all options available for patients in care planning. Fertility preservation is a key aspect of autonomy which impacts oncology care.

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Author Summary: Sally Curtiss is a student in Georgetown's Clinical Nurse Leader, Masters of Science in Nursing, program at Georgetown University. Graduating in

August 2020, Sally is excited to transition to the role of Registered Nurse while improving evidence-based practice in the hospital system in order to improve patient and hospital outcomes.