Title:
SPECIAL SESSION: Improving Outcomes of Patient-Caregiver Dyads in Chronic Illness

Type:
Oral

Keywords:
Caregiving, Dyadic Intervention and Sodium restricted diet

Description/Overview:
This session will provide updated data-based information on significance and consequence of family caregiving and dyadic intervention programs designed to improve outcomes of patients-caregivers dyads.

Abstract Text:
Heart failure (HF) emerged as a significant public health threat in the 1990s and has now reached epidemic proportions. Despite advances in the medical treatment of HF, patients with HF face frequent hospitalizations for acute exacerbations. Inadequate self-care strategies, in particular non-adherence to a sodium restricted diet, is a main cause of these rehospitalizations. Prior interventions to increase adherence have focused on increasing knowledge about restricting sodium in the diet with limited success. Unaddressed by these interventions are the major barriers of difficulty measuring and tracking daily sodium intake, family members who continue to eat high sodium diets, and a preference for salty foods. A dyadic intervention program, the Family Sodium Watchers Program, was developed to improve adherence to a SRD by both patients and family caregivers through education and innovative strategies for gradual taste adaptation to low salt foods. This intervention builds upon our prior findings. We identified common barriers to following a SRD in patients with HF including lack of knowledge and lack of family support. We reported the pivotal role of the caregivers in HF patient outcomes, and that support from family caregivers played a key role in helping patients achieve positive health outcomes, including adherence to SRD, enhanced quality of life, and decreased rehospitalization and death. We have accumulated evidence of the interdependent relationships between patients and caregiver and their mutual influence on outcomes. These findings strongly support the interdependence among dyad members and the need for dyadic interventions to improve outcomes in both patients and caregivers. Although self-care interventions have been delivered to patients and caregivers together, no studies have focused on enhancing the most influential and direct sources of support, the caregivers. This dyadic intervention is novel for its emphasis on the natural, dependent relationships between patients and caregivers, because it takes into consideration the interdependency between patients and caregivers.

References:


Content Outline:

- Importance of sodium restricted diet for patients with heart failure
- Barrier to follow sodium restricted diet
- Importance of informal caregiving to improve outcome of patients with heart failure
- Impact of interdependent relationship between patients and their family caregivers on their outcomes
- Dyadic (patient and their family caregiver) intervention program to improve adherence to sodium restricted diet

Organizer

Misook L. Chung, PhD, RN, FAHA, FAAN
University of Kentucky
College of Nursing
Professor
College of Nursing
University of Kentucky
Lexington KY
USA

Professional Experience: Dr. Chung has been studying patients with heart failure and family caregivers since 2002. Her research emphasis is on the dynamic interdependent relationship between patients with chronic cardiovascular disease and family caregivers and the behavioral, physiological, and psychological outcomes of both participating members, and on developing effective family based interventions to improve outcomes in both patients and caregivers. Her program of research covers a broad range of factors affecting outcomes in the adult heart failure population, such as adherence behaviors (e.g., low sodium diet and medication), patients’ psychological distress (e.g., depression and anxiety), perceived social support, and family caregivers’ burden and emotional distress.

Author Summary: Dr. Chung currently is an associate professor for the UK College of Nursing, where she is a co-director and research scientist with the RICH Heart Program. She has an independent
research program as well. She has conducted a number of observational/interventional research studies as a project director in the RICH Heart Program.