

# Mental Status of Parents of Children with Leukemia and Nursing Guidance

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**Abstract:** Objective: To analyze and explore the mental state of children with leukemia and their parents and the related nursing guidance methods. Methods: 50 children with leukemia admitted to our hospital from June 2015 to September 2016 were selected as the objects of clinical research. Self-rating Anxiety Scale (SAS) and Self-rating Depression Scale (SDS) were used to study and analyze the mental status of their parents. Results: The results of this study show that the anxiety and depression scores of parents of children with leukemia are significantly higher than those of domestic norms, and the scores of SAS and SDS of mothers are also significantly higher than those of fathers. Therefore, it is necessary to take certain nursing care to guide the parents of children with leukemia so as to help alleviate their mental problems. Conclusion: The results of this study show that there are still many anxieties and depressions existing in the parents of children with leukemia. The mental state of parents also has a certain impact on the treatment of children. Therefore, effective mental guidance for parents of children with leukemia is very essential. Effective guidance can help parents alleviate their negative mental emotions, and establish an optimistic attitude <sup>[1]</sup>.

## 1. Introduction

In recent years, the incidence of leukemia is increasing gradually. It is a common malignant tumour disease, which more occurs in children. Once confirmed, it will not only seriously affect the life and health of children, but also bring greater mental pressure to the parents. It has seriously affected patients and their children and quality of family life. The study results show that the incidence of parents' mental anxiety and depression whose children suffer leukemia is over 85%. Parents' mental state will not only bring great harm to themselves, but also affect the physical and mental development of children with leukemia, causing great obstacles and harm to the treatment, or even leading to mental anxiety and depression in children. This study is mainly to analyze and explore the mental state of parents of children with leukemia, and according to their SAS and SDS scores, formulate effective mental guidance strategies <sup>[2]</sup> to help parents alleviate psychological stress, thus effectively promoting the recovery of children's disease. The specific reports are as follows.

## 2. Objects and Methods

### 2.1 Objects

Fifty parents of children with leukemia who were admitted to our hospital from June 2015 to September 2016 were selected as the objects of clinical study. The total number of parents of children with leukemia was 100, and the number of parents and mothers were 50 respectively. Among them, the age range of mothers was 24-46 years old, 26 with junior high school diploma, 15 with junior high school diploma, 5 with junior college and undergraduate diploma and 4 migrant workers. Fathers' age range is 25-53 years old, 28 with junior high school diploma, 12 with senior high school diploma, 7 with junior college and undergraduate diploma and 3 migrant workers. The parents of 50 children have no history of mental illness, who can be taken as the objects of clinical

research and are comparable.

## 2.2 Methods

Self-rating Anxiety Scale (SAS) and Self-rating Depression Scale (SDS) were used to evaluate the scores of parents of 50 children. First of all, parents' consent was required. Data were obtained by anonymous method. Meanwhile, parents were informed of the significance of the study. Finally, the results were compared with domestic norms.

## 2.3 Statistical Method

The SAS and SDS scores of parents of children with leukemia were analyzed and compared with domestic norms by SPSS18.0 statistical software. The SAS and SDS scores of fathers and mothers of children with leukemia were compared, with  $P < 0.05$  as the criterion for judging the statistical differences.

## 3. Results

The results of investigation and analysis showed that the SAS and SDS scores of parents of children with leukemia were significantly higher than those of domestic norms. The SAS and SDS scores of mothers were also higher than those of fathers. Details can be found in Tables 1 and 2.

Table 1 Comparison of SAS and SDS Scores between Parents of Children with Leukemia

	SAS	SDS
Mothers	47.69±7.08	53.25±8.55
Domestic Norm	33.80±5.85	47.65±10.07
P Value	<0.005	<0.01

Table 2 Comparison of SAS and SDS Scores between Fathers and Mothers of Children with Leukemia

	SAS	SDS
Mothers	48.95±6.68	54.62±7.54
Fathers	46.12±6.42	49.89±8.45
P Value	<0.01	<0.01

## 4. Discussion

### 4.1 Mental Problems of Parents of Children with Leukemia and Causes

Nowadays, the incidence of leukemia in children is also increasing year by year which has not only affected their physical and mental development, but also caused many mental problems in parents, such as anxiety, depression and so on. The survey found that most parents of children with leukemia have a lot of mental problems. The emergence of these mental problems will bring various adverse effects on children and their parents. The main reasons for parents' anxiety and depression are children's growth, future, changes in their condition and treatment effect, etc. Of course, high medical expenses are also the causes. Because they need to take care of their children, family's economic income will be affected, thus influencing the development of parents' career. All of these are causes of mental problems of parents. In addition, by comparing with other normal children, parents of the children with leukemia may always complain their unfair fate, which tends to produce inferiority, affecting the development of their interpersonal relationship or even causing tension in interpersonal relationship. Especially during the treatment period, children will have a series of adverse reactions, facing with which, parents always suffer from both physical and spiritual torture. In addition, besides psychological problems, parents of children with leukemia are also accompanied by insomnia, which seriously affects their quality of life.

### 4.2 Influence of Parents' Mental State on Children with Leukemia

Parents' psychological state will not only seriously affect their own health, but also the treatment

and rehabilitation of children. Firstly, it aggravates children's anxiety. Children will leave the familiar living environment during the treatment, and their emotions will be relatively depressed. Additionally, parents' anxiety and depression produce a strong impact. Children's feeling of anxiety and helplessness are very detrimental to their treatment. Secondly, it also causes family tension. Children's excessive dependence on their parents results in poor interpersonal relationships. Some parents over-indulge their children, and meet their needs at all costs. It is easy for children to have a strong mental dependence, so that their independence and communicative ability are affected. Finally, it leads to resistance to treatment. A series of adverse reactions will occur during the treatment, which causes children to lose their temper and confidence in life, resulting in conflict with the treatment, and low compliance with the treatment. It not only has adverse effects on children's physical and mental development, but also on the treatment and rehabilitation of the disease.

#### **4.3 Pay Attention to the Mental Problems of Parents of Children with Leukemia and Take Effective Nursing Intervention Measures**

Investigation shows that parents of children with leukemia generally have mental problems of anxiety and depression. These problems threaten their physical function to a great extent. Once the parents' emotions show negative trends, not only the quality of care for children, but also the whole family will be affected. Therefore, it is essential to pay more attention to the mental problems of these parents and give effective and targeted nursing to them.

##### **4.3.1 Strengthen communication with parents and establish good doctor-patient relationship**

In order to better guide the mental problems of parents of children with leukemia, it is necessary to formulate reasonable nursing measures. Firstly, nurses are required to strengthen communication with parents of children, and use appropriate interpersonal knowledge or communication skills to sincerely communicate with them, so as to establish a good relationship, gain the trust of parents, listen to their inner thoughts and feelings, provide a certain targeted guidance according to their needs, and help them alleviate psychological stress <sup>[3]</sup>.

##### **4.3.2 Assess the mental state of parents of the children with leukemia in time and take effective measures to solve problems**

The mental state of parents of children with leukemia is affected by their children's condition, economic level and so on. They will produce many unhealthy emotions, such as anxiety, depression, etc. These problems seriously affect the treatment of children to a certain extent. That is to say, it is of great necessity to master the mental problems of parents, and adopt effective measures to alleviate them, which plays an important role in improving the treatment effect of children. Therefore, nurses should timely assess the mental status and health level of parents in order to timely grasp their mental development and mental needs. According to their actual mental situation, language and expressions, the mental status of these parents can be comprehensively judged, so as to adopt effective means to solve the mental problems of children.

##### **4.3.3 Education and counseling**

The mental state of parents directly affects the treatment and psychology of children, so it is necessary to effectively educate and guide parents' psychology. Nurses need to strengthen the mental education of parents, guide them to realize the influence of their psychological state on the treatment of children, and guide them to have a correct understanding of the disease that it is curable. In addition to targeted education, music therapy can also be used to alleviate the emotions of parents and help parents to reduce psychological pressure. Playing music at the right time is conducive to alleviating parents' anxiety and depression, so as to maintain optimism and stable mood.

##### **4.3.4 Provide accurate information to reduce parents' sense of uncontrollability**

Most causes of mental problems are closely related with the uncertainty of their children's future growth and future, resulting in a strong sense of uncontrollability and anxiety and depression.

Therefore, in view of the uncertainty of parents, nurses should timely inform parents and children of accurate information, prepare handbooks about leukemia in the ward, organize parents to communicate, tell them the relevant knowledge of leukemia and the methods of treatment and nursing, inform parents of the illness of children after they master the basic knowledge of the disease, organize them to learn the methods and skills of caring for children with leukemia, and formulate a perfect nursing plan so as to reduce the sense of uncontrollability of parents.

#### **4.3.5 Seek social support to relieve the economic pressure of parents**

Children with leukemia need to pay a high cost during treatment. However, many families can not afford high medical costs. High financial burden is also a major cause of anxiety and depression of parents. It even makes parents feel confused and helpless in the future life. So in order to make the mental state of parents effectively alleviated, in addition to psychological counseling, nurses can also help them to tap social support, request help and support from relevant groups, or advocate fund-raising activities to help their parents get more help and support, thereby alleviating the economic pressure of parents of children with leukemia.

#### **4.3.6 Develop health education programs to enhance the ability of parents to control their emotions**

According to the above information, parents' emotions will not only affect the children, but also affect their own health. Therefore, it is necessary to organize parents to carry out health education so that they will understand the impact of their emotions on the health of children, and guide them to control their emotions in the right way so as to maintain internal emotional stability.

### **5. Conclusion**

In a word, the results of this survey show that the SAS and SDS scores of parents of children with leukemia are significantly higher than those of domestic norms, and their mental health level is significantly different from that of normal people, especially in the aspects of mental anxiety and depression. The psychological status of parents is closely related to children. Only by mastering the psychological state in time and putting forward effective nursing guidance measures can parents alleviate their psychological pressure and unhealthy emotions, so as to lay a good foundation for the recovery of children.

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