

Personal Reflection on Chronic Illness

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Chronic illness refers to an illness that cannot be cured and treated within a short period. I feel that it is an illness that slowly develops and last for at least 4 to 6 months whose effects are long term and not easy to predict. Normally, chronic illness does not put the patient at risk of death within a short span of time; however, it can be fatal and serious if not monitored and treated by a doctor. I have observed that patients affected with chronic illness requires long-term medical treatment in order to recover – may be months or years (Greenhalgh, 2009). Chronic illness includes groups like cancer, cardiovascular diseases, respiratory and diabetes issues. In today's world, there are different kinds of chronic illness which do not go away in a short span of health treatment. This includes AIDS, tuberculosis, and hepatitis B whereas the non-communicable group includes cancer, cardiovascular, metabolic diseases (diabetes, obesity, hyper-and hypothyroidism) and respiratory diseases (bronchitis, asthma, Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease) etc.

Another issue that I have noticed is that chronic illness limits the functions of the body and might create a life threatening condition for individuals if not diagnosed earlier (Falvo, 2013). Further, chronic illness usually refrain the affected individuals from their usual or normal activities and limit them in the light of health advice through continuing treatment. However, it is also not necessary that people affected with any chronic illness will always remain sick and never get back to their normal life. There are a number of people around the world living with chronic illnesses including asthma, diabetes, obesity, etc. These illnesses affect their bodies in dissimilar ways, and most of the individuals learn how to manage their life with such illnesses.

From my experience I have observed that chronic illness appear most prevalently in the elderly people - from the age of 50 and above, and even more clearly in people over 80 years old. This dominance is mainly due to the natural aging of the human being and can be accelerated by the lifestyle of each process. However, inadequate habits and stress in the early life may develop chronic illness, impacting on professional and personal life. I feel that chronic illness may be prevented mainly through the adoption of healthy life-style with physical activities, a balanced diet, routine clinical examinations and consultations thus enabling a longer and better life.

Coping with mental and emotional challenges of a chronic illness requires a realistic but also a positive approach. Adapt to these condition or feeling good about the future may seem impossible at first, but can be achieved (Newman, Steed, & Mulligan, 2004).

References

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