

The perception of relaxation with guided imagery for cancer patients in a rehabilitation group

Bruna Franciele Toneti (School of Nursing, USP , Ribeirao Preto, Brazil), Fernando Henrique Sousa (School of Nursing, USP , Ribeirao Preto, Brazil), Lyoko Okino (Faculty of Medicine, USP , Ribeirao Preto, Brazil), Vitor Engracia Valenti (Faculty of Sciences, UNESP, Marilia, SP, Brazil), Namie Okino Sawada (School of Nursing, USP , Ribeirao Preto, Brazil).

BACKGROUND: Cancer significantly affects the quality of life of patients, since it is often associated with side effects of treatment and leads many patients to currently seek for complementary therapies to assist them in this coping process. The relaxation with guided imagery has been increasingly recognized for its effectiveness in relieving the symptoms of the disease and its benefits for cancer treatment and the patient's rehabilitation process.

HYPOTHESIS: Considering that assumption that the relaxation with guided imagery it is a phenomenon that produces meanings for patients with cancer, this study aimed to describe the meaning of relaxation with guided imagery for cancer patients and investigate how the patient views the cancer and your immune system during relaxation sessions with guided imagery, comprising also how he feels after its completion. **METHODS:** This is a descriptive and exploratory study with a qualitative analysis of the data, based on Sensible Creative Method, with dynamics of creativity and sensitivity. Data collection occurred after the completion of relaxation with guided imagery session of a research group rehabilitation and extension for cancer patients in Ribeirão Preto - SP, in which participants were asked about their perceptions of this therapy. Data analysis was performed using the Bardin content analysis method, in order to interpret the speeches of the participants and reveal the perception of relaxation with guided imagery therapy for these. The sample consisted of four patients diagnosed with cancer undergoing chemotherapy.

RESULTS: The data obtained from the interviews allowed to describe the perception of relaxation with guided imagery by the participants, who could be classified into three units of meaning: the cancer of stigma, the face of the disease and the benefits of treatment. In relation to cancer of stigma, the way patients built their narratives about the disease showed the way they faced and their personal experiences about. It may be noted that some of the patients in this study did not see the cancer picture in their body when requested during relaxation with guided imagery. As the face of the disease, it was noted that relaxation with the image guided and addressing technique reduced the perception of pain. On the last unit of meaning, benefits of treatment, the patients in this study reported a feeling of lightness, well-being and physical and mental relaxation after relaxation sessions with guided imagery. Furthermore, relaxation guided imagery provided an increased ability to relax the patient's own and thus deal with the disease. The speech of the participants of this research provided important information on how they feel during the application of relaxation and after it, which can help increase the quality of care offered by the nurse to these patients through the use of such therapy.

