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The experiences and needs of parents of children with diabetes in coping with a child's disease

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Statement of the Problem: The spread and incidence of diabetes among children and teens increases all over the world (1). Type I diabetes is one of the most common chronic diseases among children that radically changes the life of children and their families (2,3). It is important that parents cooperate with healthcare professionals and help monitor the treatment regimen (4). However, parents have stated that information about diabetes is not sufficient, and they need more support and knowledge to cope with their child's disease (5). The purpose of this study is to describe the experiences and needs of parents of children with diabetes in coping with the child's disease. **Methodology:** The research method is qualitative, empirical, and descriptive. The data was collected through semi-structured interviews and analyzed by an inductive content analysis method. Interviews were conducted during summer 2021. 10 subjects participated in the research. **Findings:** The parents' experiences of coping with a child with diabetes were related to family relationships, family coping, mental and physical health, various organizations and support systems, lack of knowledge, and awareness. The needs of parents to cope with a child's disease were mainly related to diabetes equipment, reducing family workload, better support from relatives, health professionals and different institutions, and contacting other parents with the same diagnosis. **Conclusion & Significance:** Based on the results of the research, more support, information, and help could be provided for the parents of children with diabetes in coping with children's disease. Nursing care should support the coping of children and their caregivers and families, improving the lives of both children and their relatives. This should be a central focus for health care providers, developing strategies for emotional support, reinforcement, and caregiver education, when the patient is a child.

Recent publications

1. Divers, J., Mayer-Davis, E.J., Lawrence, J.M., et al. (2020). Trends in Incidence of Type 1 and Type 2 Diabetes Among Youths — Selected Counties and Indian Reservations, United States, 2002–2015. *MMWR Morb Mortal Wkly Rep*, 69, 161–165. DOI: <http://dx.doi.org/10.15585/mmwr.mm6906a3>
2. Čergelytė – Podgrušienė, I., Gudžinskienė V. (2020). Needs and sources of information on disease management for parents of children with diabetes mellitus. *Society, Integration, Education. Rėzeknes Tehnoloģiju akadēmija*.
3. Jönsson, L., Tiberg, I., Lundqvist, P., Hallström, I. (2014). Type 1 diabetes- impact on children and parents at diagnosis and 1 year subsequent to the child's diagnosis. *Scandinavian Journal of Caring Sciences*, 29 (1), 126-153. DOI: 10.1111/scs.12140.

Biography

Mare Tupits has worked as a lecturer in the Chair of Nursing at Tallinn Health Care College since 1995. She was the leader of children nursing module. In 2008, she graduated from the University of Tartu, The Faculty of Medicine, with a master's degree in Health Sciences, specializing in Nursing Pedagogy. The topic of her master's thesis was "The experiences of school nurses of school violence, risk factors and violence prevention". From 2018, she is the responsible executor of the applied research „The needs, experiences and coping strategies of parents with children that have a chronic disease“. Her research and teaching areas are children's nursing, nursing philosophy and basics of nursing process.

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