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Doctor-Patient Relationship in Oncological Illness: The “Talking Medicine”

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For any physician, sympathetic interaction with his/her patients should remain a central concern. It is his/her task to understand the patient's hopes, fears, anxieties and social situation, as well as to understand himself and his own motives and attitudes, which can often be identified as helplessness. Continually advancing technology, rationalization, time, and the pressure for success leave less and less room for such considerations in medical practice. While patients often consider their medical care as very good, they, however, complain that the emotional support is often insufficient. Thus, for the benefit of both the doctor and the patient, every physician has to assure compassion in his relationship with the patients. Medical doctors taking care of cancer patients do not need only thorough medical training but also additional training in psychosomatic medicine.

Key words: cancer care facilities; education of patients; medical oncology; oncology service, hospital; patient cooperation; psychology, medical; psychosomatic medicine; psychotherapy, brief; social psychology