Effective Counseling for Hearing Loss and Tinnitus

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LEARNING OBJECTIVES

★ Understand psychological needs of hearing-impaired individuals
★ Provide interactive counseling about consequences of hearing loss
★ Provide counseling about strategies to facilitate communication with a hearing loss
★ Understand psychological needs of individuals with tinnitus
★ Provide interactive counseling about consequences of tinnitus
★ Provide counseling about strategies to deal with tinnitus
OVERVIEW

- Importance of understanding and connecting with your patient
- General counseling for hearing loss
- General counseling for tinnitus
- Summary
IMPORTANCE OF UNDERSTANDING AND CONNECTING WITH YOUR PATIENTS
POSITIVE CONSULTATION VS NEGATIVE CONSULTATION

Symptomatic Improvement (% of patients)

Positive Consultation

Negative Consultation

64

39
POSITIVE WORDS VS NEGATIVE WORDS

Symptomatic Improvement (% of patients)

Negative Words: 39
Positive Words: 64
EXPECTATIONS

- Influence psychology and physiology
  - Negative
    - Less likely to seek and benefit from treatment
  - Positive
    - More likely to engage in treatment and be helped
- Patient expectations are influenced by YOU
You must be able to:

- Listen
- Be Patient
- Be Sympathetic
- Be Encouraging
- Be Able to Talk Candidly
- Have Confidence in Your Ability to Help
GENERAL COUNSELING PRINCIPLES

★ Nurture expectations
★ Understand the whole patient
   ★ Overall well being
   ★ Where is the patient at
   ★ External circumstances
   ★ Support system, lack of understanding?
   ★ General emotional and physical health
★ Previous approaches tried?
★ Expectations from you?
UNDERSTAND YOUR ROLE

★ Help patient….
★ learn how to successfully live with hearing loss and tinnitus
★ become their own coach
★ figure out which techniques/tools work best for them
**Evaluation**

- **What are the individual patient’s needs?**
  - Hearing, Tinnitus, Hyperacusis?
  - Counseling?
    - Level of help needed
    - Existing problems
  - What are patient expectations
  - What has the patient tried already
Cognitive Behavioral Therapy
Cognitive Behavioral Therapy

- Developed by Beck and colleagues (1979) in the treatment of depression
- Standardized technique
- Applied to a variety of stress-inducing conditions
Rationale

- All occurrences that a person is aware of are subject to evaluation that can have emotional consequences.
- An occurrence is stressful if it is negatively evaluated and responded to with anxiety, fear or anger.
Cognitive Behavior Modification Therapy

- Acknowledge importance of your own thoughts
- Attend to what you are saying and thinking
- Identify positive, neutral, negative thoughts
- Stop negative thoughts
- Challenge validity of thoughts
- Substitute constructive thoughts
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Event</th>
<th>Belief</th>
<th>Result</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Waiting for a friend who is late</td>
<td>She doesn’t care</td>
<td>Depressed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Can’t wait to see her</td>
<td>Excited</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Hope she is okay</td>
<td>Anxious</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**Steps in CBT**

- CBT typically includes these steps:
  - Identify troubling situations or conditions in your life
  - Become aware of your thoughts, emotions, and beliefs about problems
  - Identify negative or inaccurate thinking
  - Reshape negative or inaccurate thinking
IDENTIFY TROUBLING SITUATIONS OR CONDITIONS IN YOUR LIFE

- These may include such issues as a health condition (HEARING LOSS, TINNITUS), divorce, grief, anger or symptoms of a mental illness.
- You and your therapist may spend some time deciding what problems and goals you want to focus on.
BECOME AWARE OF YOUR THOUGHTS, EMOTIONS AND BELIEFS ABOUT PROBLEMS

★ Once you've identified the problems, share your thoughts about them.
★ This includes what you tell yourself about an experience, your interpretation of the meaning of a situation, and your beliefs about yourself, other people and events.
★ Perhaps keep a journal of your thoughts.
IDENTIFY NEGATIVE OR INACCURATE THINKING

- Recognize patterns of thinking and behavior that may be contributing to your problems,
- Attend to physical, emotional and behavioral responses in different situations.
RESHAPE NEGATIVE OR INACCURATE THINKING.

- Ask yourself whether your view of a situation is based on fact or on an inaccurate perception of what's going on. This step can be difficult.
- You may have long-standing ways of thinking about your life and yourself.
- With practice, helpful thinking and behavior patterns will become a habit and won't take as much effort.
Effective Counselor Characteristics

- Ability to listen
- Patience
- Ability to be encouraging to the patient
- Ability to talk straight about depression and anxiety and psychiatric problems
- Emotional insightfulness
- Self-awareness
- Ability to laugh at the bittersweet aspects of life
- Positive self-esteem
- Emotional stability
GENERAL COUNSELING
FOR HEARING LOSS
Discuss the importance of Hearing!!

- Hearing is important
- It is not only about hearing
- BUT....
Discuss the importance of HEARING !!

★ HEARING IS IMPORTANT
★ It is not only about hearing
★ BUT....
★ CONSEQUENCES OF HEARING LOSS
  ★ Communication with people – partners, friends, work, fun
  ★ Socialization,
  ★ Looking forward to the future
STRATEGIES TO IMPROVE HEARING, SOCIALIZATION, AND REDUCE STRESS

★ Hearing Aids and...
Positioning
- Making sure that the face of the communication partner is visible and not in profile
- Minimizing visual distractions
- Minimizing noise
ENVIRONMENT

★ Good lighting
★ Moving away from light that is shining directly in the listener’s eyes (making it difficult to see the communication partner’s face).
COMMUNICATION STYLE

★ Empower them to take charge of their hearing loss by using an effective communication style
USE OF REPAIR STRATEGIES

★ Asking individuals:
  ★ To slow down
  ★ To use clear speech
  ★ To repeat, rephrase, reduce and/or elaborate sentences
USE OF REPAIR STRATEGIES

★ Anticipatory strategies prior to communication interactions
  ★ Knowing the topic and/or key vocabulary word
  ★ Using relaxation techniques
  ★ Practicing dialogue
USE OF REPAIR STRATEGIES

- Speech-reading strategies
  - Watching facial expressions and body movements
**DISCLOSE HEARING LOSS WHEN APPROPRIATE**

- Acknowledge hearing loss
- Share that communication with them is important – you care
- Move to see talker
- Reduce noise
- Request clear speech
CLEAR SPEECH

- Slow down a bit
- Speech clearly, but don’t exaggerate
- Let me see your face
- It helps if I know the topic
  - (Or if you are going to change topics)
- Let’s move away from noise
COUNSELING YOUR HEARING-IMPAIRED PATIENT WITH TINNITUS

- Almost all tinnitus patients have a hearing loss
- Many resist hearing aids because they think the tinnitus, not the hearing loss, is their biggest problem
- Providing assistance to people with tinnitus will enable them to benefit from hearing aids, related to both hearing AND tinnitus.
GENERAL COUNSELING FOR TINNITUS
What is it like to have tinnitus?
What if you heard a sound that wasn’t supposed to be there?

- Unpleasant
- No control over it
- No cure!
- Nobody understands!
- Sign of serious illness?
- There for life?
Three Approaches to Tinnitus

★ Defeated by it
  ★ overwhelmed

★ I want to Control it
  ★ Some habituation
  ★ But still wishing for it’s cessation

★ Accept the Tinnitus
  ★ Ownership, I own my tinnitus
TREATMENTS PATIENTS WANT

★ How willing would you be to accept a this treatment, if it were to completely eliminate your tinnitus?
★ Respond from 0-100 %
  ★ 0% - you would never consider it
  ★ 100% – you would absolutely try it.

Rating (0-100)
Number of Patients
Completely Eliminate

External Device

Pill

Implantable Cochlear

Implantable Brain Surface

Implantable Deep Brain
NURTURING PATIENT EXPECTATIONS FOR TINNITUS

★ Being Perceived as a Knowledgeable Professional
★ Demonstrate That You Understand Tinnitus
★ Provide a Clear Therapy Plan
★ Be Sympathetic Towards the Individual
★ Show that You Sincerely Care
Being Perceived as a Knowledgeable Professional

- Confidence in therapist and self-confidence
- Well educated
Demonstrate That You Understand Tinnitus

- Articulate, professional, well educated with respect to tinnitus
- Knowledgeable about tinnitus
- Has previous successful experience with tinnitus patients
PROVIDE A CLEAR THERAPY PLAN

- Feelings of mastery - can influence outcome
- Hope that patient can be helped
- Provide a plan to reduce effects of tinnitus
- Make patient key part of the plan
- Have patient participate in designing plan
BE SYMPATHETIC TOWARDS THE INDIVIDUAL

- Understand that their tinnitus can result in a variety of personal problems
SHOW THAT YOU SINCERELY CARE

★ Take time to listen
★ Schedule follow-up visit
★ Call if questions or difficulties arise
Provide hope that tinnitus effects can be reduced

- Discuss tinnitus research
- Refer to other, similar patients, who have helped
- Believe that patient can improve
“I am here to help”

“I am here to help you learn how to live with tinnitus”

“I cannot take your tinnitus away, but I can show you some tools and techniques that have been successful for other people with tinnitus, which might work for you”

“I need you to take an active role in this process and together let’s see if we can make things better”

“The process of counseling is for me to help you become your own coach so when you are struggling with tinnitus in your own environment you have some tools and techniques that might help”
NURTURING EXPECTATIONS – SUMMARY

- Expectations influence treatment
- You can nurture expectations
- Nurturing expectations can maximize potential for successful treatments
- Need to be honest and sincere
Tinnitus Activities Treatment - Introduction
Tinnitus Activities Treatment

- Collaborative
  - Determine needs and understanding individual patient

- Uses Tinnitus Masking Therapy
  - Low levels of partial masking

- Include activities, coping/management strategies

- Programmatic counseling in 4 areas
  - Thoughts and Emotions, Hearing, Sleep, Concentration
PICTURE-BASED TINNITUS ACTIVITIES TREATMENT COUNSELING

- A series of pictures that can help with your counseling session
- Provide orderly fashion
- Not overlook important concepts
- Easier for the patient to understand concepts
COUNSELING SESSIONS

★ Introduction
★ Session 1
  ★ Thoughts and Emotions
  ★ Give Activities (e.g. diary)
★ Session 2
  ★ Review of Session 1 Activities
  ★ Hearing and Communication
  ★ Give Activities
COUNSELING SESSIONS

★ Session 3 (optional)
★ Review of Session 2 Activities
★ Sleep
★ Give Activities (e.g. diary)

★ Session 4 (optional)
★ Review of previous Session Activities
★ Concentration
★ Give Activities
Counseling Sessions

- Summary Session
  - Review of previous Session Activities
  - General overview
  - Questions?
  - Relapse prevention
NERVE ACTIVITY CARRIES INFORMATION TO THE BRAIN
GROUP SESSIONS

- Good introduction to treatment options
- Cost effectiveness
- Possible to include spouses, parents, and children of the patient
- Appreciation that related problems are shared by many with tinnitus
Summary
SUMMARY

- Importance of understanding and connecting with your patient
  - Build hope and trust
- General counseling for Hearing Loss
  - You can offer more than just hearing aids, you care!
- General counseling for Tinnitus
  - Tinnitus Activities Treatment

Tinnitus Care Provider Certificate Program

- November 8-9, 2019
- Chicago, IL
- 16 Continuing Education Credits
- Focus on Tinnitus Activities Treatment
- Sign up at www.ihsinfo.org/tinnitus

EXCLUSIVE OFFER: Register by October 1 with code “STAGE” to save $100