

ORIGINAL PAPER

Diabetic patients' compliance to the recommended treatment: A qualitative study in Greece

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Abstract

Aims: This study aims at investigating which factors are related to the diabetic patients' compliance to their hygiene, dietary and pharmaceutical treatment, which are able to influence the disease' progress.

Methodology: The sample consisted of 15 diabetic patients recruited at a private doctor's office in a suburb of Athens, Greece. Data collection was done using participant-completed diaries, in which they described their perceptions.

Qualitative analysis was performed. A list of categories and subclasses was created which were grouped and became the essential categories included in the final list. Then the diaries were re-read, but this time alongside the final list. In this way the degree to which the categories covered the diaries' content was checked, and adjustments were made when necessary.

Results: Passivity, un-readiness, weakness to accept the disease, ignorance about the illness and its complications, poor doctor-patient relations, insufficient family supporting environment, insufficient variety of tasty foods, chronic exhaustion, and complexity of illness are shown to be detrimental for the patients' progress. Health education can help diabetic patients address issues such as diet or exercise, and to recommend a healthy dietary programme which regulates glucose levels and avoids complications.

Keywords: diabetic patients, compliance, dietary programme