

WOMENS HEALTH, REPRODUCTION AND FERTILITY

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Palliative care and pain management

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Definition of Palliative care: "Palliative care is an approach that improves the quality of life of patients and their families facing the problem associated with life-threatening illness, through the prevention and relief of suffering by interdisciplinary team taking into consideration physiological, psychosocial, and spiritual needs" (WHO, 2003) Suffering: Suffering is loss of meaning. Suffering occurs when there is a gap between expectation and reality. Principles of Palliative Care: Focus on quality rather than quantity of life. Effective communication at all levels. Respect for autonomy and choice. Effective symptom management. Holistic, multi-professional approach. Caring about the person and family. Palliative care is adding life to days, not adding days to life. It is the right of the patients not to feel pain, suffering or fear at all stages of the disease. Holistic approach is essentials for the relieve of suffering. Pain Management: Pain is an important and under-treated symptom of life- threatening illness. Correct use of analgesic medication, following the guidelines of the WHO step ladder, with the addition of adjuvant analgesics, should control the pain in nearly all cases. Attention should also be given to other aspects of pain, psychosocial or spiritual; Sometimes called "total pain". Bringing pain under control and keeping it there means assessing each aspect of pain and monitoring it. These are core skills of palliative care doctors and nurses. Medications are the foundation of pain control. Anti-inflammatory, anti-depressant and steroid medication may also have a complementary role for some patients and some sources of pain. Complementary measures are used as well as medical treatments.

Biography

Wafa Qasem Ahmad has completed her Medical degree from Kuwait University in June 1989. She is working as a Consultant, Internist in a Private Clinic.

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