

## Praying and Geriatric Nursing Care: Spiritual Nursing

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### ABSTRACT

*Spiritual care is an important concern in holistic nursing. The religious-based practice might be a good tool for supporting spiritual nursing care. For geriatric patient, the attachment to religious belief and practice is common. Praying is a common daily activity of the elderly in many countries. To use praying as an additional tool to manage medical disorder is very interesting. The praying might be by the patients, cousins or medical personnel such as nurse. The application of praying might be useful and becomes an interesting additional spiritual nursing tool in geriatric nursing.*

**Keywords:** geriatric, nurse, praying, spiritual

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### INTRODUCTION

Spiritual care is an important concern in holistic nursing. The religious-based practice might be a good tool for supporting spiritual nursing care. For geriatric patient, the attachment to religious belief and practice is common. As noted by Pereira et al., "Religion and resignation can help during critical moments" [1]. The application of praying might be useful and becomes an interesting additional spiritual nursing tool in geriatric nursing.

### PRAYING AS SPIRITUAL NURSING CARE TO THE GERIATRIC PATIENTS

Praying is a common daily activity of the elderly in many countries. To use praying as an additional tool to manage medical disorder is very interesting. The praying might be by the patients, cousins or medical personnel such as nurse. In a recent study, "praying" is a common practice of the elderly as a coping mechanism against the crisis such as receiving chemotherapy [2]. It can be

concluded that praying gives sense of linking to the Holy Spirit and increases the mental support of the hopeless patients as given in table 1.

Recently, Joob and Wiwanitkit reported that praying song in Buddhism is possibly an application for controlling of respiration problem [3]. One who prays by Buddhism "Srpayya" can achieve more success in control of breathing problem [3]. The praying might also be related to the increased concentration, seems like a kind of meditation that can help physiological rhythm control. In another study, Hekmati Pour and Hojjati also found that "cancerous patients can overcome their illness through praying, and they can also triumph cancer through self-confidence and control it" [4].

There are many possible ways to inculcate prayer in the routine care. First, the nurse might be the leader for the geriatric patients in the ward for praying at the proper time in each day. Second, nurse might also pray and make a wish to the

**Table 1.** Some important reports showing the usefulness of praying in management of the patients.

Authors	Details
Green [5]	Green noted that prayer was a kind complimentary alternative treatment [5]. Green concluded that "For healthcare providers, comfort with praying with patients can be deemed as unprofessional conduct or blurred therapeutic boundaries, particularly, when prayer is offered to patients' unsolicited by the patient or their family members" [5].
Pearce and Chiaramonte [6]	Pearce and Chiaramonte noted that patients might ask for praying and the offer of praying to them can be a good spiritual care [6].
Bernstein et al. [7]	Bernstein et al. reported an interesting result from an exploratory study of HIV+ adolescents that praying is a kind of desired spiritual support required by hopeless HIV infected patients [7].
Cheng et al. [8]	Cheng et al. performed a study among Chinese cancerous patients and found that the patients usually requested for praying as a supportive spiritual care during their end stage of disease [8].

patients during nursing care to the patients. This can be a good spiritual nursing support. Nevertheless, there are some barriers to inculcate prayer in daily practice. The selection of the proper praying for each patient relating to the patient's religious background is needed. In addition, there must be a space for praying, which might be limited in crowded ward. Finally, loud praying might be annoyance. The control of sound is needed. Structural and functional settings are required to adopt this practice. The good planning for the praying program is important. Specific place in the ward might be set for praying. In fact, this can be seen in some Muslim hospitals that there is a specific place for daily praying in the ward.

## CONCLUSION

Nursing for an old patient usually required intensive spiritual care as holistic nursing approach for psychological support. Since praying is a religious-related practice that is routinely performed by geriatric patients, the application of routine praying as a tool for geriatric nursing care is very interesting and should be systematically studied. The use of praying seems to be an effective tool in nursing management of the elderly. There are also some evidence that praying can be a supportive tool for the treatment of some diseases. Further research studies conducted on the health benefits of prayer among the geriatric patients are recommended.

## CONFLICT OF INTEREST

None

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