



LECTURE

The acute inpatient rehabilitation process after stroke

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Abstract

Introduction: Nowadays, the burden of stroke is still notoriously high. Stroke also has a significant impact in the quality of life of the patients. The rehabilitation process is usually long, and its acute phase is frequently paramount in its success.

Purpose: The aim of this lecture is to provide an outline of the clinical practice in the acute inpatient rehabilitative care of adults recovering from stroke.

Results: The best rehabilitation setting for stroke patients is often a difficult decision that takes multiple factors into account. Patients that have higher functional impairments after stroke and that, at the same time, are able to cooperate in an intense inpatient rehabilitation program benefit the most from admission to an acute inpatient rehabilitation unit.

In this setting, stroke rehabilitation requires a sustained and coordinated effort from a diverse team that includes the patient, family and caregivers, physicians, nurses, physical and occupational therapists, speech-language therapists, psychologists, and social workers. The coordination of these team members is vital in maximizing the effectiveness of the rehabilitation process.

The main areas of intervention include gait training, upper limb rehabilitation, speech therapy, dysphagia rehabilitation, cognitive assessment, pain management and spasticity prevention. Medical complications also arise more commonly in the acute rehabilitation phase rather than later, and the rehabilitation team is responsible for identifying and treating them accordingly.

The concept of function is omnipresent throughout the various interventions and the rehabilitation specialist should establish a functional prognosis according to all the variables involved. The social integration of the stroke survivor in society is usually a measure of the success of the rehabilitation process and the secondary prevention measures are also reinforced during this period of time.

Conclusion: The acute phase rehabilitation of stroke survivors is a complex process that strives to maximize their vital and functional prognosis.

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