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Hyperthyroidism

Patient name: _____

NRS
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- I. The client/caregiver has a basic understanding of the anatomy and physiology of the thyroid gland.**
- The thyroid gland is located in the lower neck and in front of the trachea.
 - It is divided into two lobes and is joined by a band of tissue called the isthmus, making it resemble a butterfly.
 - It concentrates iodine from food and uses it to synthesize two hormones.
 - These two hormones regulate the body's metabolic rate.
- II. The client/caregiver can define hyperthyroidism and possible causes.**
- It is a syndrome that occurs when the thyroid gland produces an excess of thyroid hormones.
 - Excess thyroid hormones cause an increased rate at which the body uses energy.
 - Noncancerous lumps growing in the thyroid gland can also increase the production of hormones and cause hyperthyroidism.
 - Graves' disease (an autoimmune disorder) can attack the thyroid gland and cause overproduction of hormones.
- III. The client/caregiver can recognize signs and symptoms of hyperthyroidism.**
- Heat intolerance, sweating
 - Sudden weight loss
 - Alterations in appetite
 - Frequent bowel movements
 - Changes in vision
 - Fatigue and muscle weakness
 - Menstrual disturbance
 - Impaired fertility
 - Mental disturbances possibly depression
 - Sleep disturbances
 - Tremors
 - Thyroid enlargement
 - Rapid heartbeat

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- IV. Client/caregiver can list measures to alleviate symptoms of hyperthyroidism.**
- Restlessness
 - Avoid emotional or physical stimulation until metabolism returns to normal
 - Avoid excessive exercise and plan for rest periods
 - Avoid caffeine, yellow and red food dyes, and artificial preservatives
 - Avoid aspirin and aspirin products
 - Weight loss
 - Eat a high-carbohydrate, high-protein diet
 - Monitor weight on a regular basis
 - Diarrhea
 - Avoid highly seasoned foods
 - Use BRAT (bananas, rice, apples, tea) during acute episode
 - Increase fluids to maintain hydration
 - Eyeball protrusion and eye irritation
 - Apply cool moist compresses
 - Shield eyes with eye patches or sunglasses
 - Cover or tape eyelids shut at night
 - Sleep with head of bed elevated
 - Limit fluids and sodium to decrease fluid retention in eyes
 - Notify physician of visual disturbances
 - Use artificial tears or eye lubricants as ordered
 - Heat intolerance
 - Provide cool environment
 - Dress appropriately
 - Encourage good hygiene
 - Depression
 - Obtain emotional support or counseling as needed
 - Dress attractively to increase self-esteem

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- V. The client/caregiver is aware of possible medical treatment.
- Suppression of hormone production with medication (check medication classification for thyroid medication)
 - Destruction of thyroid tissue with radioactive iodine
 - Surgical removal of part of the thyroid gland
- VI. The client/caregiver is aware of signs and symptoms of possible complications.
- Thyroid storm or thyrotoxic crisis has a sudden onset with symptoms of high fever, very rapid heart rate, delirium, dehydration, and extreme irritability. Prompt treatment is necessary because it can be life threatening.
 - If untreated, thyroid disease can cause elevated cholesterol levels, heart disease, infertility, and osteoporosis.

RESOURCES

National Institute of Diabetes and Digestive and Kidney Diseases
www2.niddk.nih.gov/

American Thyroid Association
www.thyroid.org/

National Institutes of Health/Thyroid Disease
www.nlm.nih.gov/medlineplus/thyroiddiseases

Community support group

Dietician or nutritionist

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