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Muscular Dystrophy

Patient name: _____ Admission: _____

NRS
DATE INITIAL

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- I. **The client/caregiver can define muscular dystrophy.**
 - A. It is a group of rare inherited muscle diseases. The muscle fibers are unusually susceptible to damage.
 - B. Muscles (primarily voluntary) become progressively weaker.
 - C. In late stages of disease, fat and connective tissue replace muscle fibers.
 - D. There is no known cure, but medications and therapy can help slow the course of the disease.
 - E. Duchenne muscular dystrophy is the most severe form. It is the most common form of muscular dystrophy that affects children. Boys are at greater risk.

- II. **The client/caregiver can explain symptoms of muscular dystrophy.**
 - A. Signs and symptoms appear between the ages of 2 and 5.
 - B. Muscles of the pelvic, upper arms, and upper legs are affected first.
 - C. Most children by late childhood cannot walk.
 - D. Life expectancy is only for late teens or early 20s.
 - E. Signs and symptoms are
 - Frequent falls
 - Large calf muscles
 - Difficulty getting up from a lying or sitting position
 - Weakness in lower leg muscles with difficulty running and jumping
 - Waddling like gait
 - Mild mental retardation sometimes

- III. **The client/caregiver can list measures to manage or deal with muscular dystrophy.**
 - A. Physical and occupational therapy as ordered
 - B. Range of motion exercises

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- C. Hydrotherapy (hot baths) for comfort and maintain range of movement
- D. Use balanced diet with fruits, vegetables, milk, poultry, and fish. Limit the intake of sugars and saturated fats. Adapt texture of foods as needed if having difficulty chewing or swallowing. Feed smaller, more frequent meals.
- E. Take medications as ordered.
- F. Assistive devices are available for
 1. Prevention of contractures
 2. Maintain mobility and independence
 3. Possible respiratory equipment to assist respiratory muscles
 4. Surgery to relieve contractures and relieve tendons
- G. Promote good skin care and positioning if confined to bed or wheelchair.
- H. Keep immunizations current.
- I. Have regular follow-up visits with physician.
- J. Encourage medical alert bracelet.
- K. Support groups are available for client and parents/caregivers.
- L. Have a medical social consult for financial concerns.

RESOURCES

Muscular Dystrophy Association
800-572-1717
www.mdausa.org/

Support groups

Respite care

Clergy

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