CARDIAC REHABILITATION NURSING

Carol Rossman Jillings





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REHABILITATION NURSING

Edited by

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To the memory of my father, Roland Rossman

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Preface

Rehabilitation of the person with cardiac problems is not a new area of nursing care, nor is it an emerging specialty; it is a well-established field of advanced practice and research. Interventions aimed at the return of cardiac patients to health have long been developed, described, and refined. Clinical and research literature in nursing focuses on programs for cardiac rehabilitation and presents a host of interventions. The *context* of rehabilitation and the application of related concepts and principles to multiple client groups, however, demand further attention.

Although processes and strategies for assisting cardiac patients are well known, two areas of concern may be identified: (1) the examination and resolution of issues arising from or relating to rehabilitation interventions and (2) the broader implementation of rehabilitation interventions so that a wider range of patients is targeted. Traditionally, textbooks on cardiac rehabilitation have been concerned with the population of coronary artery disease patients and have focused on medical and surgical intervention and the related nursing implications. An examination of this literature reveals principles, concepts, and intervention strategies that, with modification, could be applied to persons with other forms of heart disease at various stages in the diagnostic or treatment process. Thus, the purpose of this volume is to explore cardiac rehabilitation in its broadest context, to address relevant issues arising from clinical practice, and to relate nursing interventions to several categories of patients. Contributors to this text have drawn on a wide range of literature in the field, on their own research findings and the implications of those findings, and on nursing contact with patients and families in both institutional and community settings.

Part I discusses general concepts key to the understanding of cardiac illness and rehabilitation. Readers should note that the client can be an individual or a family, a child or an adult, and can be experiencing any of a number of symptoms or therapeutic interventions. The purpose of such a "wide-angle"

approach is to introduce the practitioner to common ideas that may be transferred into a variety of clinical settings. Part II focuses on specific issues and concepts that evolve during cardiac rehabilitation. Authors in this part elaborate on the research and clinical experiences that assist in understanding the problems or concerns of particular client groups. The concluding chapters of Part II present case examples to aid the reader in applying the more general knowledge covered earlier. Part III addresses nursing intervention strategies. Finally, Part IV explores future directions in cardiac rehabilitation nursing, highlighting both a major intervention (client education) and the means to interventions (nursing research).

This book is intended for a wide readership; the content is applicable in settings ranging from preventive care to critical care to home care. It is hoped that nurses who work with cardiac patients of all ages and subject to a multiplicity of problems will benefit from the content and be able to apply it in their particular area of interest and expertise. The concept of cardiac rehabilitation is too complex—and too significant—to be confined to specific settings or client groups. Indeed, clients themselves are far more complicated than their diagnosis, symptoms, or setting may indicate, and the major responsibility of nursing is to acknowledge this complexity and to consider all relevant variables in any intervention.

Carol Rossman Jillings

Acknowledgments

The broad approach to rehabilitation that underlies this book is a product of clinical practice, teaching, and collegial interaction. Generating this approach and the specific ideas that it encompasses would not have been possible without the comments of clients, the questions and explorations of students, and the observations of nurses in the cardiovascular field. The diligence, expertise, and commitment of the contributors helped the approach to take form and become clinically relevant. Finally, the patience and expert secretarial assistance of Becky Miller are greatly appreciated.

Introduction

The literature on cardiac rehabilitation often focuses on the design of programs for achieving client-centered goals. Such descriptions of programs may include directives for various interventions, but issues or problems may nevertheless arise during program implementation. For example, patients may move more slowly than anticipated or may have difficulty making prescribed changes in behavior. Teaching may not be absorbed or may be ignored. Families may perceive goals and directives that differ from the perceptions or interpretations of the patients. Such implementation issues may relate to factors beyond the design of a particular program. They may originate from the individuality of the clients themselves, from unique variables, or from interpretations of or reactions to illness that may not be accounted for in a rehabilitation program. Thus, descriptions of phases or steps in rehabilitation may have limited utility, particularly for nursing, because directions for tailoring programs or for using flexibility in applying programs may be absent.

This book examines not only the "recipe" for cardiac rehabilitation nursing but also the variations in ingredients that may have to be considered in program adaptation. It is intended for use by nurses—clinicians, teachers, students, and researchers—who are concerned with the rehabilitation of patients with cardiac illness. The broad objectives are as follows:

- to describe a conceptual framework for the rehabilitation of cardiac clients
- to discuss selected issues and concepts emerging from a variety of approaches to cardiac rehabilitation in a variety of settings
- to explore rehabilitation issues and concepts in depth, delineating their scope and significance for nursing
- to present intervention strategies that relate to selected issues, problems, and concepts
- to examine in depth the impact of selected interventions on the rehabilitation of cardiac clients and their families

In order to achieve these objectives effectively, the text has been organized into four major parts. Each chapter treats a unique topic in cardiac rehabilitation and builds on or adds another dimension to the preceding chapters.

The book should help the reader to understand these beliefs and assumptions underlying both the conceptualization of cardiac rehabilitation and the issues, ideas, and interventions discussed.

- Cardiac illness can be defined as congenital or acquired in nature. Within
 these two broad categories are a host of variables that affect the needs
 of the individual and necessitate medical and nursing intervention.
 Rehabilitation is a process that can occur with any cardiac illness,
 regardless of its origin or trajectory.
- Nursing plays an instrumental role in the rehabilitation of people with cardiac illness in a variety of settings through a multitude of interventions. Nursing care in cardiac rehabilitation is based on knowledge from the sciences and humanities as well as knowledge derived from nursing research.
- The client of nursing in cardiac rehabilitation may be the individual with cardiac illness, the family or significant others, or a group of individuals with similar problems or concerns.

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