

Stress, coping and social support in hiv

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The paper " Stress, Coping and Social Support in HIV" is a worthy example of an assignment on health sciences and medicine. Stress in HIV positive people usually comes across as depression, insecurity, and high levels of anxiety. Although stress is common among HIV patients, it is found to be higher among individuals belonging to lower economic groups. Although anxiety panics are common among people with AIDS, underlying anxiety disorders are found to be a major cause of anxiety panics. These are mainly caused by chronic stress experienced due to chronic illness like AIDS. Anxiety includes various emotional responses and disorders like excessive worry, insomnia, appetite changes, difficulty concentrating, fatigue, irritability, muscle and/or jaw tension, changes in libido, increased a desire to use alcohol and other drugs, rapid heart rate, sweating and flushing. Although HIV is a disease that requires medical and clinical interventions and management, the psychological status of the individual greatly impacts his/her stages of recovery. Depression is closely associated with HIV and mainly a consequence of social stigma caused due to isolation and beliefs associated with AIDS. Olff's work clearly establishes a relationship between the psychological status of individual and his/her immune response to medication and coping; chronic stress and depression impact the sympathetic nervous system and hypothalamic-pituitary-adrenal axis. Thus, action of adrenalin and cortisol negatively impacts immune response. Managing depression is extremely important to prevent faster progression of HIV. Management of depression will help the patient to adhere to the medication schedule, avoid high-risk sexual behavior, drug use and other risky behaviors. Hence, improving immune response would first require coping with stress through psychological interventions. Treatment of stress

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caused due to anxiety disorders and depressions includes a combination of psychotherapy, counselling, and anti-depressant medications.