



AbouBekr BELKAID University

Faculty of Medicine

First Year of Dental Medicine

SSH Module

# Disability, pain, suffering and death

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# Course objectives

- 1. Define disability**
- 2. Define pain**
- 3. Describe the different components of pain**
- 4. Describe the manifestations of pain**
- 5. Define suffering**
- 6. Describe the patient's reactions to death**

# Disability: Law of February 11, 2005 for equal rights and opportunities

- Disability is defined as any limitation of activity or restriction of participation in society
- experienced in one's environment by a person due to a substantial, lasting or permanent impairment of one or more physical, sensory, mental, cognitive or psychological functions, multiple disabilities or a disabling health condition.

# Disability

- ▶ Disability is a function of the relationship between disabled people and their environment.
- ▶ It arises when these individuals encounter cultural, material, or social barriers that are accessible to their fellow citizens.
- ▶ Disability, therefore, lies in the loss or limitation of the ability to participate, on an equal footing with other individuals, in the life of the community.

## The pain

- ▶ **Hippocrates of Kos (460-370 BC)**

"Pain is the watchdog of our health, barking to alert the body."

- ▶ **Galen (131-201 BC)**

"Pain is a sign for diagnosis."

"...a sensation related to touch"  
(impairment of touch)

- ▶ **Avicenna (980-1038 BC)**

Pain is defined as a "modification of the humors."

- ▶ Its role as a symptom allows for diagnosis and provides information on the progression of the disease

## **The pain**

*19th century*

*First steps in anesthesia:  
N<sub>2</sub>O, ether, chloroform  
(dental)*

*1803: Morphine isolated  
from opium*

*1847: Legalization for  
medical procedures*

*1860: Anesthetic effect of  
cocaine*

*In France:*

*1970: Pain consultation*

## **The pain**

- ▶ **According to the WHO:**
- ▶ Pain is an unpleasant sensory and emotional experience associated with actual or potential injury or described in terms of such injury.
- ▶ Pain therefore has two closely linked dimensions:  
psychological and somatic.

## The different components of pain

- ▶ **Sensory-discriminative aspect:** decoding of the quality (burn, sting, etc.), intensity, duration, location
- ▶ **Affective or emotional aspect:** unpleasant, painful, barely tolerable tone
- ▶ **Cognitive and behavioral aspect:** defense reactions, anticipation, interpretation
- ▶ **Memorization**

## **The manifestations of pain**

- ▶ **Verbal manifestations:**  
Shouting, moaning,  
complaining,  
aggression, irritability
- ▶ **Psychological effects:**
  - **Anxiety**
  - **Depression**
  - **Appetite and sleep  
disturbances**

## The conséquences of pain

- Pain quickly leads to suffering.
- It is felt most intensely by individuals who are injured, traumatized, and trapped in silence following physical, psychological, or emotional violence, and who can no longer find the words.
- Severe pain also sometimes leads to this experience of the unspeakable, to this feeling that it is very difficult to make oneself heard, that speech is impossible.

# Suffering

- Suffering is this **pressing need to recount** the upheaval experienced, and the feeling that words are futile, that there are no words to adequately express it and be understood.
- **Incurable illnesses**, degenerative diseases, and severe disabilities put the capacity for speech to the test.
- **Experiences of the body**, again, and inextricably linked to them, are experiences of language.

# Suffering

- ▶ It is both the necessity and the difficulty of speaking,
- ▶ of telling the story, of making sense of this flood of emotions and sensations,
- ▶ in order to understand them, and no longer simply endure them.
- ▶ But it is a story that incomprehension, shame, and fear still prevent from being told.

# Death

- ▶ **Preparing to die often means taking stock of one's life.**

Those who reflect on their lives seek to find meaning in their journey, to connect events, to leave a legacy.

- ▶ **Resolving conflicts with family and friends?**

The desire for reconciliation exists. However, conflicts may remain unresolved, either through impossibility or by choice.

- ▶ **Finding peace in the face of the inevitability of impending death?**

Reaching a form of acceptance is possible, but not everyone succeeds. Some oscillate between calm, fear, anger, or denial.

## Death

- ▶ Spiritual or religious aspects are of great importance to many terminally ill patients and their families.
- ▶ Representatives of various religious faiths work with the healthcare teams in some hospitals and palliative care facilities.
- ▶ Healthcare staff can help patients and their families find appropriate support.

## **The man being sick**

- ▶ *Patient's reactions to the illness*
  - ❑ *Narcissistic injury*
  - ❑ *Feelings of guilt*
  - ❑ *Fear of abandonment*
  - ❑ *Awareness of secondary gains*
  - ❑ *Development of defense mechanisms*
- ▶ *Family reaction*
- ▶ *Social reaction*

## **The patient facing death**

### *Five stages: E. Kübler*

- ▶ *Denial and isolation*
- ▶ *Anger*
- ▶ *Bargaining*
- ▶ *Depression*
- ▶ *Acceptance of death*

## Finally....

- ▶ Respect the patient's defenses and limits
- ▶ Do not present the facts bluntly
- ▶ Emphasize the "positive" elements
- ▶ Encourage the patient's participation
- ▶ Importance of non-verbal communication: proximity, eye contact, gestures

**"Hope must not die before the patient"**

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- ▶ Cours pr rahoui



**Thank you for your  
attention**