Learning and Support Preferences of Adult Patients With Cancer at a Comprehensive Cancer Center

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Key Points . . .

- Patients with cancer prefer to learn about their illness through interactive, interpersonal communication with their physicians.
- Providing reinforced messages in print materials can enhance communication between patients and healthcare teams.
- Successful education takes place when providers are aware of and adapt to patients’ needs and preferences.

Assessment, planning, implementation, and evaluation are vital components of the patient education process. Assessment, the first and most crucial part of the process, leads to a description of learning needs and characteristics and is the foundation for education planning and implementation (Almquist & Bookbinder, 1990; Gilloth, 1993; Lorig, 1996; Rankin & Stallings, 1990; Redman, 1993; Volker, 1991). When an assessment of learning needs is not conducted, trial and error become the basis for patient teaching.

Realizing the importance of assessment, the Joint Commission on Accreditation of Healthcare Organizations (JCAHO) (1999a, 1999b), the Oncology Nursing Society (ONS) (1995),

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