The Relationship Between the Means of Communication and a Self-help Group for Laryngectomized Patients

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Methods
Patients: 43 patients who underwent laryngectomy in three university hospitals in Fukuoka Prefecture which agreed to cooperate in our research. Self-administered questionnaires were handed directly to each patient before discharge and they were asked to send them in three times, and nine, and twelve months after discharge.

Purpose: The aim of this research is to examine the means of communication used by laryngectomized patients by clarifying how their admission to a self-help group affects their means of communication.

Results: I showed the characteristics of study participants in Table 1. The number of subjects decreased sequentially. On the means of communication used by patients, those who used speech before discharge from hospital and 9 (13.6%) three months after it, 15 (23.7%) six months after it, 16 (23.9%) twelve months after it. Those who used shunt speech before discharge from hospital and 3 (4.7%) three months after it, 6 (9.1%) six months after it, and 11 (15.6%) twelve months after it. Those who used written message before discharge from hospital and 11 (14.1%) three months after it, and 1 (1.4%) six months after it, and 3 (4.3%) twelve months after it. Those who used esophageal speech before discharge from hospital and 3 (4.7%) three months after it, 4 (6.1%) six months after it, and 10 (14.9%) twelve months after it. Those who used the esophageal speech might also talk to each other specifically, the number of those who were admitted to a self-help group was 30 (42.6%) before discharge from hospital, 5 (7.0%) three months after it, 10 (14.9%) six months after it, and 16 (23.9%) twelve months after it.

Discussion: More than fifty percent of laryngectomized patients used no speech such as written message and gesture before discharge from hospital but many of them gradually acquired the speech skills after discharge from hospital. Yet, there was no one who relies only on the means of speech. Esophageal speech is based on the technique in which a patient puts a certain powder into the esophagus and regurgitates it, producing a vibration in the pharyngoesophageal segment. The side effect of the esophageal speech is heavy physical and therefore better for patients, so that only five patients used it twelve months after discharge from hospital. It is reported that there are few patients who later rely only on no speech. Yet, most laryngectomized patients tried to be accustomed to social life by using both speech and no speech because they expected that there are few patients who later rely only on no speech. It also clarified that conversation time gradually increased after discharge from hospital. Yet, it was difficult for them to be accustomed to society because there are few patients who later rely only on no speech. Yet, it was difficult for them to be accustomed to society because they expected that there are few patients who later rely only on no speech. However, it was considered that it is necessary to join a self-help group and conduct training by evaluating the results of the study. Furthermore, it was considered that there was no association between the means of communication and the participation in a self-help group. These results might show that communication methods after discharge from hospital implied that they might be cut off from their social life due to their own problems such as their physical problems and the handicap of communication.


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