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# Influence of anxiety in adolescents during surgical hospitalization: improving nursing care

**ABSTRACT** | The study aimed to identify according to the literature the factors that influence adolescent anxiety during the period of surgical hospitalization and determine the influence of anxiety during this period to direct nursing care. Systemic review of the literature was used to perform the study and according to the results, it was possible to identify the importance of the role of the nursing team to detect risk factors and periods of emotional instability, to ensure the improvement of quality of life, comfort and greater interaction and thus minimize anxiety and patient's fear during hospitalization in the surgery period.

**Keywords:** Surgery; Adolescents; Anxiety; Violence.

**RESUMEN** | El estudio tuvo como objetivo identificar, según la literatura, los factores que influyen en la ansiedad de los adolescentes durante el período de hospitalización quirúrgica y determinar la influencia de la ansiedad durante este período para guiar la atención de enfermería. Para llevar a cabo el estudio, se utilizó una revisión sistemática de la literatura y de acuerdo con los resultados encontrados, fue posible identificar la importancia de papel Del equipo de enfermería para detectar factores de riesgo y períodos de inestabilidad emocional, para garantizar la mejora de calidad de vida, la comodidad y mayor interacción y, por lo tanto, minimizar la ansiedad y el miedo del paciente durante la hospitalización en el período transoperatorio.

**Palabras claves:** Cirugía; Adolescentes; Ansiedad; Violencia.

**RESUMO** | O estudo teve como objetivo identificar de acordo com a literatura os fatores que influenciam na ansiedade do adolescente no período de internação cirúrgica e determinar a influência da ansiedade durante esse período para direcionar a assistência de enfermagem. Para realização do estudo utilizou-se revisão sistemática da literatura. De acordo com os resultados encontrados foi possível identificar a importância da equipe de enfermagem para detectar os fatores de risco e períodos de instabilidade emocional, para garantir a melhoria da qualidade de vida, conforto e maior interação, dessa forma, minimizar a ansiedade durante a internação no período transoperatorio.

**Palavras-chaves:** Cirurgia; Adolescentes; Ansiedade; Violência.

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## INTRODUCTION

The moment before a surgical procedure raises the stress level of patients and their support network, especially those who accompany them when they are hospitalized. Such stress can be manifested in the form of violence, between family members and even with the hospital staff. The preparation for the surgery must have a multidisciplinary team to reassure the family and avoid postponing the surgery<sup>(1,2)</sup>.

Recent studies have demonstrated the association between violence,

whether family or not, directly in the psychosocial well-being of adolescents. The male sex being the most vulnerable to developing mental disorders, among them: anxiety, depression manifesting aggressively and abuse of licit or illicit drugs<sup>(1)</sup>.

Violence presents itself clinically in adolescents, affecting their mental state and must be observed by health professionals. Exposure to violence can manifest itself in an internalizing way with symptoms of anxiety, depression and somatization; or externalizing, such as aggression, disruptive conduct and substance abuse<sup>(1)</sup>. There is a process of normalization of violence, the individual does not see a way out according to the situation, according to Patias<sup>(1)</sup> "desensitization can lead teenagers to not show fear, sadness or avoidance, but it can lead them to react aggressively."

During adolescence, individuals are more vulnerable to the emotions experienced and the expectations of their groups, often distorting their image so

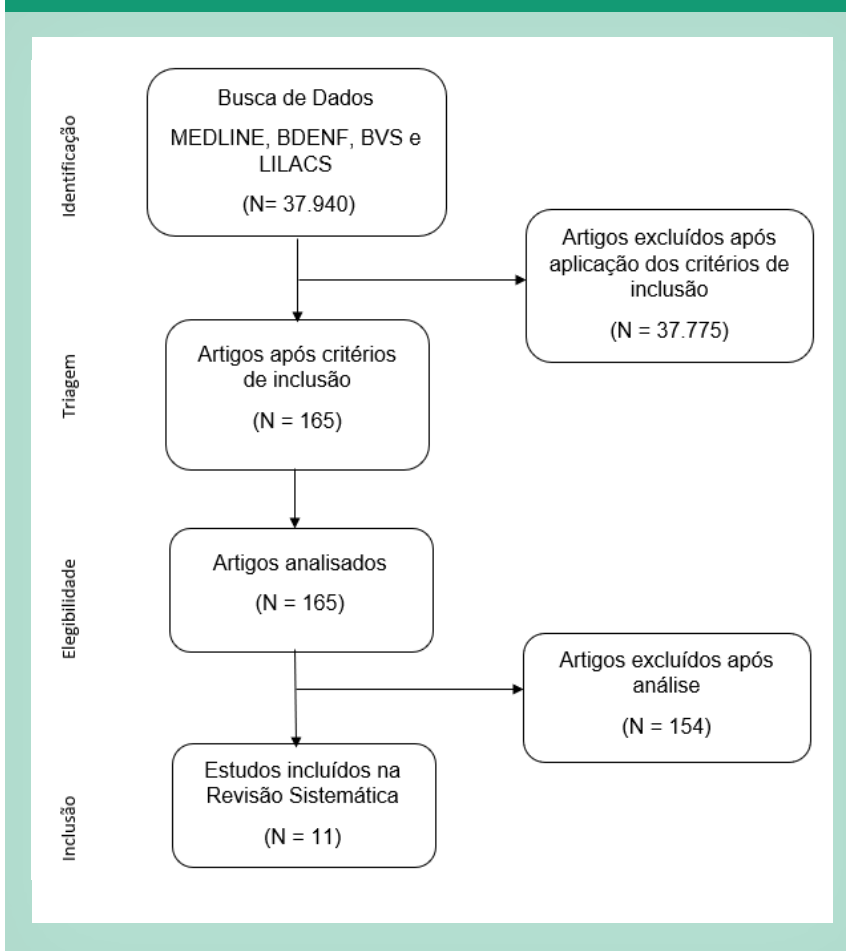
as not to be ridiculed and humiliated. These experiences leave negative affective memories, increasing the risk of internalizing problems, such as depression, and externalizing problems, such as aggression<sup>(3)</sup>.

Life-long events can have a toxic impact on the mental health of young people, so an assessment of these ne-

gative impacts is necessary to promote resilience and mitigate the impact of circumstances<sup>(3)</sup>. Prevent the onset of mental illnesses, such as depression and increased levels of anxiety. It is extremely important to manage the care of this adolescent with the possibility of manifesting anxiety, as it can affect their treatment and prolong their

hospital stay. It was asked: What are the facts that influence the anxiety of adolescents during the period of surgical hospitalization? The objective of this study was to identify, according to the literature, the factors that influence adolescent anxiety during the surgical hospitalization period and to determine the influence of anxiety during hospitalization for nursing care.

Fluxograma 1. Busca e seleção dos estudos. Rio de Janeiro, RJ, Brasil, 2020



METHODOLOGY

Systematic literature reviews were used to search for articles, these being: MEDLINE, BDNF, BVS and LILACS. Four scientific descriptors were used: "Surgery", "Adolescents", "Anxiety" and "Violence". After research, 37,940 articles were found, the exclusion criterion was publication of the last 5 years and text in Portuguese, reaching a total of 165 articles, after analysis a total of 11 articles were selected. The inclusion criteria were articles that used instruments to assess levels of anxiety, show the importance of the companion and family to the patient, associate other psychological disorders and experience with anxiety, analysis of anxiety at the time of hospitalization and humanization of care.

RESULTS

After selecting the articles by two individuals individually, the analysis was performed. The aim is to facilitate and optimize the understanding, Chart 1 presents the main and most used articles during the present discussion.

Quadro 1. Estudos selecionados. Rio de Janeiro, RJ, Brasil, 2020

Autor/ano	Base de dados	Objetivo	Achados importantes
Gonçalves et al 2015	SciELO	Caracterizar a ansiedade dos pacientes no pré-operatório de cirurgia cardíaca.	O estado geral do paciente afeta seu sistema imunológico, elevando o cancelamento de procedimentos.
Gomes et al 2016	SciELO	Analisar o conceito de ansiedade da hospitalização, identificando antecedentes, atributos e consequências.	A ansiedade hospitalar pode ocorrer por: hospitalizações anteriores, privação de atividades recreativas, desconhecimento dos procedimentos e submissão a procedimentos invasivos.

Cardoso, et al 2018	BVS	Investigar os indicadores de saúde mental, fatores de risco e de proteção individuais e contextuais.	Indivíduos com diagnóstico de depressão reportam maiores afetos negativos e ansiedade.
Batista, M.N.; et al 2016	BVS	Revisão integrativa da literatura de instrumentos de depressão em crianças/adolescentes e adultos.	Maior facilidade de aplicação de instrumento de pesquisa em universitários e escolares.
Santos et al 2015	BVS	Compreender como os graduandos de enfermagem percebem a importância do acompanhante no processo de internação hospitalar.	O processo ensino-aprendizagem tem papel fundamental na construção desse olhar ao graduando sobre o acompanhante.
Patias et al 2017	BVS	Investigação da relação de exposição à violência direta e indireta e bem-estar subjetivo com os sintomas de depressão, ansiedade e estresse.	A associação entre violência direta e violência indireta demonstra um fator de risco para desenvolvimento da ansiedade e depressão.

## DISCUSSION

The humanization process of nursing care in the preoperative period of adolescents. The surgical procedure has limitations before and after surgery, such as changes in lifestyle, in addition to the vulnerability of the operation, which can generate anxiety<sup>(4)</sup>. Such anxiety is aggravated by mechanized and widespread assistance that makes patients more susceptible to the development of complications.

The excess of technologies in a hospital environment is often responsible for removing health professionals from their patients. As it is an unknown place, placed in risky situations, the operating room is an environment that generates anxiety and fear. It is the role of nurses and health professionals to guide them to minimize the effects of anxiety so that the patient understands and is more relaxed during the procedure.

The most common feelings found in patients during this period were: fear, anxiety and nervousness, with anxiety being more evident in women; it was also demonstrated that the patients who receive the visit in the preoperative period to remove doubts had a lower level of anxiety. As obstacles to the humanization of care by professionals, insufficient resources, long hours of work and lack

of guidance were found<sup>(5)</sup>.

The patient's emotional state affects his immune system and, in his general physical condition, the high level of anxiety contributes to an altered normal state and, thus, to the cancellation of procedures, which generates greater anxiety and fear on the part of the patients. It is necessary to improve the assistance provided in the hospital environment and in continuous care with Primary Health Care, which has a fundamental role in home care due to the high proximity to patients<sup>(4)</sup>.

According to Gonçalves<sup>(4)</sup>, the nursing team plays a decisive role in the attempt to minimize the preoperative anxiety experienced by these patients for providing knowledge. It must be ensured that the patient is physically and psychologically prepared to face both the procedure and the postoperative period.

In the humanization process, the creation of a bond becomes a key point for the whole process, with the bond you gain trust, and, with that, patients feel more comfortable. With proper guidance, the patient is calmer and less anxious, reducing the possibility of surgical suspension. Humanized care is the best path to quality unified and interprofessional treatment.

According to Milani<sup>(6)</sup>, the concept of humanization that addresses

the valuation of the different subjects involved in the health production process, whether users, workers or managers, as the values that guide this policy are the autonomy and the protagonism of the subjects, with a view to promoting the quality of care and adequate working conditions.

Humanization-based care is a process that extends to everyone, reducing the traumas related to the process experienced. The expansion of green areas for coexistence, a multiprofessional team, permission to speak about feelings and desires experienced by each improve the humanization process.

### Mental health disorders and their influence on the manifestation of anxiety in adolescents

Depression can manifest itself in any age group in the individual's life, which can often lead to suicide among young people; in addition to influencing the social cycle and the period of hospital dependency. Therefore, an early diagnosis improves the prognosis of patients, and is done in most cases using pre-defined scales approved by the Council of Psychology<sup>(7,8)</sup>.

Depression causes higher levels of anxiety, some of the risk factors are low socioeconomic status and lack of family support. The family environment presents the main support ne-

work to prevent the development of depression, individuals with a strong bond and support from parents are at lower risk of developing mental disorders, drug addiction and school dropout. Health professionals must be trained to identify risk factors and periods of emotional instability to ensure an improvement in life, comfort and greater interaction<sup>(7,8)</sup>.

Adolescents interpret traumatic impacts of their lives with the feeling of negative affectivity, manifesting higher levels of anxiety, depression and stress<sup>(3)</sup>. When hospitalization and surgical procedures become necessary, these events increase the likelihood of high levels of anxiety and development of depression, in which case specialized monitoring is necessary.

According to Gomes<sup>(9)</sup>, by definition, anxiety consists of an emotional state with psychological, social and physiological components that can affect the individual at any stage of his development. Such condition becomes considered pathological when exaggerated or disproportionate to the stimulus or qualitatively different from what would be expected in each age group

Anxiety is an emotional state of instability on the part of the individual, being manifested in moments of psychological weakness, moments of fear and tension and, when it is associated with other pathologies, it becomes more serious. When affecting the development, it must be treated to improve the quality of life, allowing the individual to have social life, in addition to being able to carry out their activities and medical procedures.

The family's stay until the time of anesthesia induction improves the postoperative prognosis. Nurses should talk to teenagers, providing information about the operating room, postoperative pain management and

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The discovery of a disease affects the patient and his support network. These, on several occasions, decrease their frequency of work and leave their homes to dedicate themselves partially or exclusively to the patient. The development of anxiety, depression, changes in sleep patterns, and social isolation is recognized both by the support network and by the patient himself

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the healing process. Such measures prevent psychological complications after the surgical procedure and reduce anxiety levels in the pre and postoperative period<sup>(10)</sup>.

The Statute of Children and Adolescents (ECA) brings together several rules that aim to fully protect the rights relating to children and adolescents. This document is guaranteed by law in Title II, Fundamental Rights, Chapter I, Right to Life and Health, Article 12, where health care establishments, including neonatal, intensive care and intermediate care units, must provide conditions for the full-time stay of a parent or guardian, in cases of hospitalization of a child or adolescent - Wording given by Law No. 13,257, 2016<sup>(11)</sup>.

Therefore, it is the right of the child and the adolescent to have a full companion during the entire hospitalization period. Thus, hospitalization will impact both the life of the hospitalized patient and his companion.

The discovery of a disease affects the patient and his support network. These, on several occasions, decrease their frequency of work and leave their homes to dedicate themselves partially or exclusively to the patient. The development of anxiety, depression, changes in sleep patterns, and social isolation is recognized both by the support network and by the patient himself<sup>(12)</sup>.

Often the caregiver becomes overwhelmed with the daily needs of the hospitalized patient. This overload is often associated with depression, anxiety, physical and mental fatigue, stress, lack of social support and worse quality of life. Thus, the health professional must keep the companions, with physical and psychological health support, so that this interferes as little as possible in patient care<sup>(12)</sup>.

It can be said that, in cases of need for surgical procedures, feelings

of fear and anxiety are intensified, as surgery can influence the alteration of the patient's emotional phenomena and the support network.

The companion has the important role of mediating communication between the patient and the team, which helps professionals in planning and implementing care. In addition, the participation of the family member helps in collecting data from the hospitalized patient, helping in the definition of problems and nursing diagnoses, which makes care safer and more individualized<sup>(2)</sup>.

#### CONCLUSION

The feeling of anxiety in patients is significant at various times during hospitalization, with great relevance when undergoing surgical procedures. Anxiety destabilizes the patient's emotional state, influencing the care process provided



The nurse must encourage the patient to seek ways of coping, preventing these feelings from disturbing the care process, preventing future complications.



The nurse must encourage the patient to seek ways of coping, preventing these feelings from disturbing the care process, preventing future complications. Therefore, professionals must be qualified to provide comprehensive care, having a holistic view of the patient, having a fundamental role in guiding, providing all necessary information and decreasing the likelihood of feelings, such as anxiety and others, making the process quieter hospitalization. Humanized assistance is the best way to achieve this goal.

Family support is essential at this point, since in this moment of physical and psychological fragility the adolescent sees his support network as a strength. Family interaction and in support groups and conversation circles is a way to reduce anxiety levels so that, in this way, they expose their desires and keep calm in their hospitalization process. 🐦

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