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Clinical interviewing in cardiology

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Clinical interviewing is useful for detecting the medical indices of heart disease, disease severity and unhealthy lifestyle in the context of the so-called lifestyle medicine. These indices may or may not be linearly associated with patients' suffering from a psychological point of view. Suffering in cardiology is a broad concept, which includes not only the clinical manifestations of depression or anxiety, but also the subclinical and/or psychosocial aspects of distress such as minor depression, demoralization, abnormal disease behavior, allostatic overload. These factors can influence, beyond medical parameters, the clinical course of heart disease, prognosis, adherence to treatment, and healthier lifestyle. A paradigmatic example of the importance of clinical interviewing in cardiology is summarized in the ESCAPE project (Horizon 2020). It focuses on the crucial role of clinical interviewing in distressed heart failure patients, allowing the care manager to provide interventions tailored to patients' specific needs. It also implements a joint assessment and intervention process led by a collaborative team of experts including general practitioners, cardiologists, psychosomatic experts and pharmacologists, offering insights into physical, mental and pharmacological aspects that may affect patients' quality of life and the course of their disease. In conclusion, dedicating time focused on the patient through clinical interviewing is useful for detecting the above-mentioned aspects and benefits the relationship between doctor and cardiac patients, according to a shared intent (patient-centered approach), also to improve motivation for treatment.