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## Critical care patient's perspective of stress

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**Background:** More than 5.7 million patients are admitted annually to intensive care units (ICU) in the United States (US). Critical care hospitalization may trigger stressful experiences.

**Objectives:** To explore the patient's perspective of stress according to their medical diagnosis in intensive care units (ICU) and describe their perspective on stress management strategies.

**Methods:** A descriptive correlational design. The sample included 63 patients. The environmental stressors questionnaire (esq) was used to measure the patient's stress.

Results: Gastrointestinal (Gi) patients reported the highest mean stress score in ICU (mean=87.91), followed by sepsis cases (mean=85.67), then oncology patient's (mean=85), diabetic ketoacidosis (mean= 84.67). Orthopedic cases (mean=81.5), cardiac cases (mean=76.23), neurological (mean= 71.4), and the minimum stress score was reported by respiratory cases (mean=71). Gi patient's recommended informing them about the waiting time for any biopsy results if any, limit npo status time frame, manage pain, nausea and vomiting episodes more effectively. The remaining sepsis, oncology, dka, orthopedic and cardiac patient's recommended decreasing cardiac alarm's sound threshold, decrease blood withdrawal for lab tests, and allow family members to be at the bedside.

**Conclusion:** The findings may be useful for guiding interventions to provide holistic patient care that decrease the patient's stress according to their medical diagnosis

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