

Types of sensation & its Disorders

Skin Sensation

- There are 4 categories of sensation: Pain, Pressure, cold, Warmth
- Sensitivity varies for each sensation & with the area of the body
- Where there are more pain receptors the skin will be more sensitive & more pain will be felt.

- Cutaneous Disorders: Loss of sensation of pressure, Pain, Cold & warmth

Smell & Taste

- Both are closely related.
- Sensation of taste called “GUSTATION”.
- It gives us 4 basic tastes: sweet, sour, salt, bitter.
- Taste receptors are lined inside the taste buds most of which are found on the tip, sides and back of the tongue.

- Olfactory Disorders: sensitivity to odours or absence of recognition of certain odour.
- Gustatory Disorders: Decreased in taste sensitivity, complete lack of taste for certain substances.

Vision

- Retina of each eye contains receptor cells responsible for vision.
- There are two types of receptors- RODS & CONES.
- RODS respond only to lights. They are responsible for night vision.
- CONES on the other hand respond both to light and dark and to colours. They are responsible for daylight vision.

- Visual Disorder: myopia(Near Sightedness), Hyperopia(far sightedness) and colour blindness.

Hearing

- The sense organ for hearing is the ear which changes sound waves into nerve impulses.
- Sounds are collected by the outer ear and carried to the eardrum.
- Vibrations of the eardrum are amplified and transmitted to the inner ear by three small bones.
- Waves established in the fluids within the inner ear generate nerve impulses.
- These impulses are then carried through the auditory nerves to the temporal lobes of the brain.
- Hearing plays an important role in the understanding of spoken language.
- Sound can be loud or soft, low or high.

- Auditory defects: Hearing can be impaired by injuries, fixation or disengagement of the ossicles, diseased tonsils, measles, mumps, etc.
- Varying degrees of deafness
- Deafness to certain specific tones
- A subjective ringing or roaring in the ears

Nursing Implication of sensory Process:

- The nurse should always be alert to malfunctioning of sense organs and abnormal sensations in patients.
- A sick person reacts to colors. During illness even moderate lighting may irritate and cause discomfort. For patients who need rest and sleep lights can be subdued.
- For stimulation and encouragement warm bright lights can be used.
- A sick person is very much averse to loud noises. It increases the patient's irritability.
- The nurse should thus avoid loud noises in the ward. Patients with hearing loss require special effort by the nurse to be sure that the instructions are given clearly and questions are answered and understood.

- Patients with loss of skin sensation require special attention to prevent further injuries to the skin while treating or using treatments or applications of any kind.
- Bandages, adhesive tapes, plaster casts, heat or cold, even wrinkled linens may be very irritating to a patient.
- Gentle skin care is necessary to prevent irritation. Patients should always be handled smoothly and gently to avoid pain and discomfort.
- In healthcare environment the possible sources for bad odor are: body eliminations, treatment procedures, dressings, drainages and medications.
- These must be controlled to the maximum extent possible by proper ventilation and prompt disposal of waste.

- A sick person may not relish his food.
- Taste can be improved with good mouth care and well prepared, clean and fresh food served in an appetizing way.
- The nurse can use her knowledge of sense organs for training her own senses. This will train her sense organs to observe her own functions.