

## 5. PREPARATION FOR TREATMENT

### PREPARING WOMEN FOR POTENTIALLY THREATENING PROCEDURES & TREATMENT

*Reference: Psychological Clinical Practice Guidelines (1999), pp.23-24.*

*NB: Psychosocial Clinical Practice Guidelines, "Recommended steps involved in adequately preparing a woman for potentially threatening medical procedure", Table 2.5, p.24.*

#### EVIDENCE

- Providing information about procedures reduces emotional distress & improves psychological & physical recovery (Level I).
- Providing psychological support before undergoing surgery reduces psychological distress (Level I).

#### OBJECTIVE

To allay anxiety by preparing the woman adequately for potentially threatening medical procedures or interventions, such as breast surgery, chemotherapy & radiotherapy.

## Before the procedure

### CHECKLIST

- Explain:
  - the necessity of the procedure and its expected outcomes
  - where & when the procedure will be performed
  - who will perform the procedure
  - tests necessary prior to the procedure
  - what will happen during the procedure.
- Talk about concerns and discuss how best to cope with these concerns.
- Talk about different coping strategies, eg. relaxation & imagery.

## During the procedure

### CHECKLIST

- Reinforce information & provide any extra information as the procedure occurs.
- Encourage the use of coping strategies.
- Be aware of non-verbal signs of distress, reassure.
- Give the woman a sense of control where possible (ask if ready/feeling prepared to start procedure).

## After the procedure

### CHECKLIST

- Encourage the use of coping strategies.
- Encourage support person to be present.
- Make enquires about any special needs of the woman.
- Arrange appropriate follow up and support (sections 11 & 12).