

00294 Measuring patients' perceptions of suffering from being confined to isolation precaution

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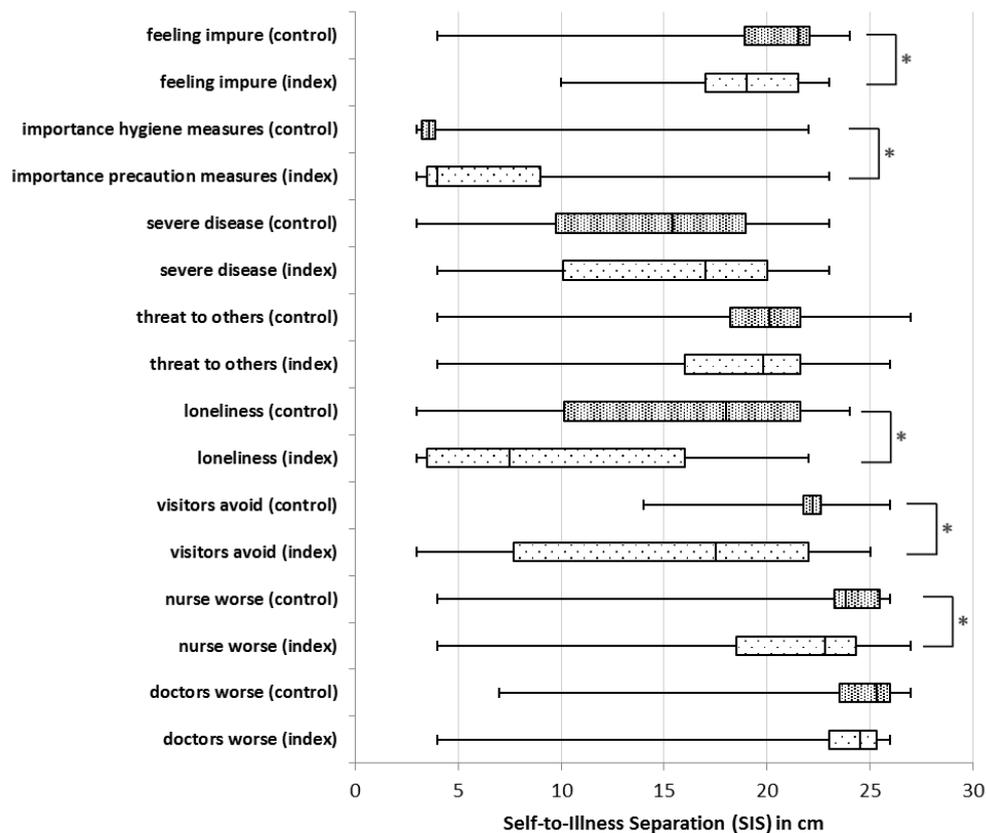
Background: Isolation precautions (IPs) are applied to prevent transmission of pathogens in healthcare settings. One of the major drawbacks may be the negative impact of patient care by restricting their contacts with healthcare workers and visitors potentially leading to adverse health outcomes. In addition, IPs are expensive, and their impact on lowering the rate of transmission should be balanced with their side-effects and cost. Studies on the influence of IPs commonly focus on measured medical outcomes neglecting the potential impact on psychological distress coupled with perceived or even real inferior care. However, evaluation is impeded due the lack of a reference standard. We aimed to investigate the impact of isolation measures on mental and social well-being in adult patients in short-term isolation compared to non-isolated patients using a standardized tool from psychology science.

Methods: We set up a comparative observational trial comparing mental well-being of hospitalized patients cared under IP with those without IP. For every adult isolated inpatient we selected two controls matched for age, ward and illness severity. The validated Pictorial Representation of Illness and Self Measure (PRISM) instrument was applied once during hospitalization. Smaller distance in self-to-illness separation (SIS) signifies higher importance for a patient.

Results: 156 patients participated of which 63 were under IP and 93 were matched controls. Median (interquartile range) duration of isolation was 5 days (2-10). Inferior nurses' care, avoidance by visitors, feeling of loneliness and impurity were statistically significantly stronger perceived by isolated patients compared to their matched controls (all $p < 0.05$) (Figure).

Conclusions: Even short-term isolation of patients can lead to psychological distress and perception of inferior care. The benefits of IPs should be balanced with the evidence that such measurements impact the rate of transmissions

Fig. Boxplot of the results of the Pictorial Representation of Illness and Self Measure (PRISM)



Measuring the importance of different surrogates of mental and social well-being in patients confined to isolation measures (index) compared to non-isolated (control) patients by means of PRISM with smaller SIS representing higher importance of this particular item. * signifies a statistically significant difference ($p < 0.05$).

