

# "Waiting and the waiting room: how do you experience them?"

Posted At : June 30, 2011 3:28 PM | Posted By : [Tim Brunson, PhD](#)

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Full title: "Waiting and the waiting room: how do you experience them?" emotional implications and suggestions from patients with cancer.

Waiting can increase discomfort. The goal of this study was to identify moods and fears of cancer patients while in a waiting room and to capture their concrete suggestions for an anthropocentric transformation of waiting itself. A 15-item questionnaire was given to 355 patients who came to our Out-patient Oncology Clinic. Eighty-three percent of patients felt that waiting has an emotional cost, 35% were upset by talking about their condition with others while waiting, and 26% suffered a major emotional impact seeing other sick people and witnessing their clinical decline. Eighty-nine percent of patients suggested that alternative activities, such as meetings with professionals, doctors, and psychologists, be organized during the waiting period; 65% suggested fun activities (music therapy, drawing courses, library, TV). Most patients asked to have the freedom to leave the waiting room. This option, feasibly by means of IMs/"beepers," would limit their sense of having a lack of freedom or being robbed of their time. This study highlighted the complexity and heterogeneity of emotional implications that waiting causes in patients with cancer and collected many patients' suggestions about how to create a constructive, free, and personalized waiting period, overcoming the boredom, distress, and psychological suffering it causes.

J Cancer Educ. 2011 Jun;26(2):388-94. Epub 2010 Mar 4. Catania C, De Pas T, Minchella I, De Braud F, Micheli D, Adamoli L, Spitaleri G, Noberasco C, Milani A, Zampino MG, Toffalorio F, Radice D, Goldhirsch A, Nolè F. Division of Clinical Pharmacology and New Drugs, European Institute of Oncology, Milan, Italy, chiara.catania@ieo.it.

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