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Longing: A Patient and Caregiver Focused Clinical Diagnostic Validity (CDV) Study

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Diagnosis of a chronic or life-threatening illness or a traumatic event can lead to both physical and psychosocial changes in patients. The patient may lose physical abilities, leaving them dependent on another person. They may no longer be able to work, either due to the illness itself or because their treatment plan may leave them too fatigued to carry out their daily activities. The patient may experience a disconnection from his or her present situation and long to get back to the life before the disease. Untreated longing can lead to loss of self-esteem, increased fears, and loss of hope. Nurses must be able to assess for longing in order to intervene to impact patient's quality of life. The article reports on research to learn patients' and caregivers' personal experiences with longing.