



## Studying The Relationship Between Prayer and Religious Beliefs on Spiritual Health of Cancer Patients

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### ABSTRACT

*This study investigated the effect of prayer and religious beliefs on spiritual health of patients with cancer. The population consisted of all patients with cancer, the Department of Pediatric Oncology Hospital of Fasa city.*

*The sample in this study, 100 patients with cancer more than 20 years of age and have read and write had been.*

*The results showed There is a significant relationship between frequency of prayer and spiritual health.*

*And the hypothesis is confirmed.*

*Other results In this study, the hypothesis that there is a relationship between prior experience of prayer and attitude towards prayer and spiritual health of cancer patients, the results of the Pearson test showed that the previous experience of prayer and spiritual well-being of cancer patients a significant positive relationship exists.*

*Another result was that the overall effect of prayer and spiritual health of cancer patients there is a significant positive relationship.*

**Key words:** *prayer, religious beliefs, spiritual health, cancer patients.*

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### INTRODUCTION

Quick changes of life, behavior, and modern medical care patterns have increased life expectancy in patients with chronic diseases. Facing these diseases can cause severe crises in a person's health. On the one hand, these diseases make him more vulnerable, and on the other hand, cause personal and spiritual growth. One of the most common chronic diseases is cancer. Cancer destroys the hopes and aspirations of the individual and affects not only the body, but also his soul (Shojii Tehrani, 2004; quoting Rezaei et al., 2007).

Cancer is a disease that is created by excessive proliferation of cells and the proliferation of these cells continues until the entire human body turns into a mass of cancerous tumor. These tissues grow so much that even food and oxygen do not reach normal cells, so with the loss of healthy cells, human dies too (Nadaf and Alizadeh, 2008).

Cancer cells are very similar to cells of the organs they are derived from and have DNA and RNA similar (but not identical) to them. It is because of this similarity that the immune system does not differentiate them from the normal tissue, especially if the immune system is weak. Cancer cells have the ability of rapid proliferation and this proliferation is not limited to telomeres of DNA. This leads to formation of a huge tissue mass and due to destruction of the organ or critical structures leads to a disruption in the body functioning (Hamnava, 2011).

The patient is forced to accept long-term treatment with toxic drugs. Before and after chemotherapy, feelings of fear and anxiety are created in the patient. There are different reasons to this, such as side effects of chemotherapy, feelings of isolation and withdrawal, and loss of independence in life, so because of threatening nature of cancer, diagnosis increases

the spiritual needs of the patients (O'Brien, 1998; quoted Rezaei et al., 2007).

Spirituality (prayer and religious beliefs) is a state of being, but spiritual health is a state of knowing. Spiritual health refers to a sense of acceptance, positive emotions of ethics and a sense of positive interaction with a superior power of self and others that is obtained through a dynamic and harmonious cognitive process, emotional-action process, and personal outcome.

Spirituality is a lost issue and demand of human throughout the world that is not bound to time and place. There is no single definition for spiritual health, and it is difficult to specify, explain, define, and measure its components and indicators. No doubt, complete meaning of spiritual health is not limited to prayers and spiritual states in healing diseases and its being a successor to current medical treatments or complementary medicine. It is possible to believe that spiritual aspect has a deep impact on knowledge, beliefs, attitudes, values, and behavior and affects biochemistry and physiology of the body and this effect on mind, heart, soul, and body is called spiritual health.

Definitions provided for spiritual health are based on knowledge defining ontological, epistemological, and religious beliefs in eternal nature of God and revelation. Researchers unwilling to heed the creator of man and non-sensory issues had a general definition of spiritual health used in a lot of foreign papers and books and given as references by some religious scholars frequently (Abbasi et al., 2013).

Praying improves the quality of life, supports patient's treatment and coping with side effects, strengthens the immune system, and improves coordination of physical and spiritual well-being in patients with cancer (Jung, 2005; quoted Rezaei et al., 2007).

Spirituality IS searching for meaning and purpose to establish communication with a sacred source or an ultimate reality. Whether looking for communication with a sacred source or an

ultimate reality, spirituality has a kind of moral excellence and responsibility for this sacred resource or ultimate reality. Spiritual intervention has been taken into consideration as an effective treatment in recent years. Religion and spirituality offer a collection through which, one can understand the meaning of life (West, 2001; quoted Kashani et al., 2013). For this reason, spirituality is a strong predictor of hope and mental health and an important source in physical health and improving diseases (Richard, and I drive Top, 2007; quoted Kashani et al., 2013).

Spiritual health is central to human health, so fostering and promoting spiritual health may be one of the convenient ways of coping with diseases (McClain et al., 2003). Spiritual health is a vague and complex process of human evolution that creates a harmonious relationship between internal forces of the individual and is characterized with stability in life, peace, having a close relationship with God, self, society, and the environment that determine the integrity of an individual (Craven and Hirnle, 2003). Relationship with God is among the important issues in the discussion of spiritual health that can be achieved through prayer. Attention to the meaning of prayer and experiencing the relationship with God create a rich source for the patients and enable them to go on a spiritual journey that is perhaps healing and brings peace to their soul (Dossey et al, 2003).

Prayer plays an important role in coping with cancer and helps them to improve their spiritual health at the time of sickness (Young, 2005; quoted Rezai et al., 2007).

Fehring et al. (1997) have stated that there is a direct relationship between inner faith, spiritual health, hope, and other positive states, and there is a negative relationship between inner faith, depression, and negative states. Therefore, we can conclude that inner faith and spiritual health have a relationship with hope and positive moods in patients with cancer that lead their compatibility with this disease (Fehring et al., 1997).

This study was conducted to examine the effect of prayer on spiritual health of patients with cancer.

Religious and spiritual beliefs play an important role in the quality of compatibility with joys and hardships of the world. Faith can create a sense of purpose and conduct their lives. Whenever families face with difficult situations, such as health problems and illnesses, their religious beliefs help them cope with the sense of hopelessness and helplessness, give order and meaning to their lives, and brings control back to their lives. For some families, spirituality can be a source of great power. In fact, spirituality can have a significant impact on people's mental state (Esfahani, 2010).

Strengthening spiritual health is a way for the treatment of emerging new diseases in the community, through which one can attempt to prevent many cancer diseases (Vahdaninia, 2012).

First hypothesis: there is a relationship between frequency of prayer rituals and previous experience of prayer with spiritual health of cancer patients.

Second hypothesis: there is a relationship between attitudes towards prayer and the overall effect of prayer with spiritual health of cancer patients.

### Spiritual health

Spiritual health is considered as one of the spiritual dimension of health in human. Generally, spiritual health provides a coordinated and integrated relationship between the internal forces, in other words, spiritual health determines integrity. Spiritual health is a unique force that coordinates physical, mental, and social aspects and is necessary for coping with diseases (Rezai et al., 2006).

Spiritual health means a score that each of the subjects get from Palutzion and Elison spiritual health questionnaire.

### Prayer

Concerning the concept of prayer, it can be stated that prayer means "inner connection with the source of all goodness" and this connection must be based on a kind of self-awareness and consciousness of thoughts and hearts. This means that first man should get out of neglect to reach the true level of prayer (Makarem Shirazi et al., 1993).

Praying means the score that each of the subjects get from prayer questionnaire by Allison.

### The definition of cancer

Cancer is a disease in which cells lose their normal ability to divide and grow and this results in the seizure, destruction, and deterioration of healthy tissues. The collection of these cancerous cells and destruction of cells of healthy tissues create a mass called a tumor.

If the tumor is confined to a layer and does not spread to other tissues and organs, the tumor is benign (non-cancerous), and if the tumor spreads or is potentially capable of spreading to other tissues and organs, it is called malignant or cancerous.

Some forms of cancer are metastasis, which means that they have aggressive nature and spread to other tissues in the body, mainly through the blood and lymph, and create new tumors.

A cell is the basic and constructive unit of life that like a sack contains protein, fatty acids, carbohydrates, and life material called DNA. Growth, proliferation, and replication are of the characteristics of living cells.

The genetic structure of each cell determines its growth, division, and death. Normally, the replacement of regular cells follows a regular routine and growth and cell renewal process occurs constantly in the body. Cancerous or malignancy occurs when:

- Some of the cells start to multiply out of control.
  - The parts normally responsible for defending the body such as the immune system are not able to prevent the uncontrolled division.
  - A number of abnormal cells become larger and larger.
- Overall, four gene groups are responsible for cell division:
- Oncogenes (genes responsible for tumor) send a message to the cell to reproduce in normal circumstances. Disruption and change of these cells lead to abnormal cell proliferation and are considered cancer cells.

- Tumor suppressor genes: These genes produce specific proteins that under normal circumstances have the reverse duty to oncogenes and order cell to stop proliferation. One of the most important genes of this genes group is P 53.

- Suicide genes: cell death or cell suicide is one of the most complex cellular factors that allows cells to commit suicide in unusual circumstances to prevent proliferation and spread of injury to other cells. When suicide genes are damaged, they are no more able to destroy faulty cells and are considered as cancerous cell.

DNA-repairing genes: these genes are responsible for repairing damaged and defective DNA that by secreting different proteins provide the context for damaged-DNA repair, but when these DNA-repairing genes are damaged, the cells lose their recovery ability and genetic disorders non-repair of DNA lead to cancer (Aliradi, 2010).

### The most important causes of cancer

Genetics, environmental factors, unhealthy nutrition, age, radiation of sunlight, smoking and alcohol and some viruses\*

One of the most harmful, dangerous, and common type of cancer for women is breast cancer whose prevalence is increasing. This increased prevalence along with increasing with improved treatment methods, increased survival of patients, increasing use of screening and diagnosis in the early

stages lead to an increase in the number of patients that may have suffer bilateral breast cancer (Heidari and Olfatbakhsh, 2011).

#### Reasons that could be involved in the development of cancer tumors

1. Ionizing radiation (radiation such as alpha, beta, and gamma rays) are of the main cause of tumor development.
2. Sunlight
3. Chemicals: working with chemicals on a regular basis, inhaling, and touching them can cause many types of cancer in the body.
4. Air pollution caused by suspended particles in the air, the presence of toxic and semi-toxic gases, the presence of lead and destructive effects of these materials on the immune system- polluted air should be considered as one of the most important factors in the development of various diseases such as cancer in today's machine life
5. Lack of vitamins causes cancer of the esophagus and gastrointestinal tract. Lack of vitamin C and zinc is the cause of esophageal cancer.
6. Alcohol and alcoholic beverages
7. Preservatives: preservatives in canned foods and packaged snacks, chips, sausages, salami, and conserves can be cancer-causing agents in the digestive system. In addition, added colors to the food and chemical essential oils can play a role in creating cancer.
8. Sucking drug
9. Eating hot foods with excessive heat is of the causes of cancer of the mouth, sinuses, esophagus, and stomach. Drinking hot tea is an example of this.
10. Poor oral health
11. Wind and the cold
12. Chronic stimulation: these stimulations such as malformed dentures, tight shoes, and equipment always used that are tight cause chronic stimulation and can lead to cancer (Chitsaz, 2009).

In the literal definition, the term spirituality is derived from the Latin word *Aspratus* meaning breathing, and has a concept broader than religion and refers to a dynamic, private, and experimental process. Religion and spirituality overlap because both offer frameworks, through which humans can understand meaning, objective, and transcendent values to their lives. In other words, spirituality is like awareness of the universe or a force beyond the material aspects of life and a profound feeling of unity or union with the universe (Salarifar *et al.*, 2005).

In idiomatic definition, spirituality may be defined in terms of meaning of life and peace of mind or relationship with a transcendental existence (Ando *et al.*, 2010).

According to Scholes, spirituality is experiencing a meaningful relationship with self, others, the world, and the dominant power expressed in form of reactions, narration, and actions (Dehshiri *et al.*, 2008).

As a result, although a common definition of spirituality cannot be attained, reviewing literature of spirituality suggests that most of these definitions believe two-dimensional nature of spirituality. The first dimension is religious spirituality where the concept of individual is expressed to be from a sacred existence or ultimate reality in a religious style. In the second dimension, spirituality is an existence where particular psychological experiences are considered that in fact have no connection with the sacred or ultimate reality (Hartz, 2005; quoted Safairad *et al.*, 2010).

#### Spiritual health with religious attitude

As mentioned, in materialistic and humanistic look, there is a minimal attitude towards spiritual health, and is placed only as a physical therapy tool at the disposal of patients. In addition,

in that attitude, spirituality does not necessarily have immaterial and divine origin and includes any spiritual element that can be effective in improving patients' health is, but in the religious perspective, in addition to what is stated in secular perspective, a wider and greater status is considered for spiritual health. This is because, in this view health does not merely include human body because man, in addition to the body, has soul and believes that as the body becomes sick, the soul can become sick, and as the treatment of the body needs doctors and medical prescriptions, human spirit needs physicians and pharmacists. In this view, in addition to being able to be at the service of physical health, spiritual health has independent identity and personality.

#### The effects of spiritual elements on health

In materialistic view, spiritual causes are meaningless, and as in this perspective, medical science is based on empirical knowledge, discussion of the effects of spiritual factors on treating patients has no place and may have a negative effect, since the least disadvantage perceived is that the patient feels no need for the physician or does not believe his treatment. In discussions over issues related to human fate, Motahari has addressed this question, and in addition to material factors emphasizes the spiritual factors, and after that expresses some examples of spiritual affairs effective in hanging the material situations states and says: In the previous examples, what we cited about the causes and factors influencing change of fate did not go beyond material factors and their effects, i.e., we considered the world of events only in terms of material aspects and sensory relations, and the elements we included as the causes were physical and sensory. Obviously, from the materialist world-view, it should be sufficed to these factors and causal relations between them. However, from divine perspective, which does not confine reality in the context of the objects, qualities, and physical reactions, there is more to world of events with more complexity, and factors involved in the emergence of events are far greater.

From material point of view, contributing factors in the death, provision, health, happiness, and prosperity are only material. It is only the material factors make death closer or farther, extend or diminish provision, make people healthy or unhealthy, or bring happiness and prosperity or destroy them. However, from the divine worldview, other factors called spiritual factors along with material factors are effective in the processes of death, provision, health and happiness and the like.

#### Theories related to religion

William James has provided the following definition of religion: religion is experiencing and feeling events that happen for every human when alone and away from all attachments, so that the human understands that he has created a relationship between him and what James calls divine (James, 1977). On the other hand, religious behavior is of complex human behaviors that psychologists and psychiatrists have not considered enough (Gobari Banat, 2009).

Strong religious beliefs make people be less exposed to stress, depression, less tendency to delinquency, and divorce occurs less in families. The existence of these beliefs significantly reduces the possibility of suicide among followers of divine religions (Gobari Banat, 2005).

Results of most studies have also shown the positive effect of religion on psychological adjustment, and negative effect of atheism on psychosomatic diseases symptoms. In their study about the impact of religion and coping with cancer, Aklin *et al.* concluded that there is a positive relationship between intrinsic religiosity and the meaning of life, and there is a negative relationship between despair, hostility, and social isolation with religion. Kolip has shown that praying can

increase survival of children with leukemia. Research has also shown that religious commitments have a positive effect on adaptation of parents who have recently lost their children due to cancer, so that they know it is from God (Yegani, 2000).

In a study by Kashani et al. (2013) as the efficacy of spiritual therapy in reducing anxiety, depression, and distress in women with breast cancer, analysis of covariance of depression, anxiety and stress test showed that spiritual therapy is effective in reducing anxiety, depression, and distress of women with breast cancer.

In a study conducted by Babai et al. (2014) as investigating the role of mental health and related factors in patients with metastatic digestive tract cancer, the results showed no significant relationship between age, gender, marital status and educational levels with spiritual health, but there was a significant correlation between spiritual health and location of the patient.

In a study on obstacles to religious care of patients, Abedi et al. state that performing religious actions, worship, and prayer not only affect the emotional state but also the physical quality of the person and sometimes within a few minutes or a few days improve the physical illness (Abedi et al., 2005).

In a study conducted by Momnei Goleh Ghasemi et al. (2011) as the relationship between spiritual health and depression in patients with breast cancer, the results showed that in patients with breast cancer with higher scores in spiritual health, depression is less has.

In their study on 500 students aged from 16 to 47 years, Lu and Handal (1995) found a significant relationship between religion and adaptation to university, especially for newcomer students. On the other hand, Robbins and Francis (1996) and Francis and Staner (1987) found a positive relationship between positive mood and religious components.

Moreover, Virasing and Taperman (1994) found that religion brings about happier life for people. In the case of depression and anxiety caused by waiting for death, especially in old age, they found that as religious attitude becomes stronger, anxiety and depression caused by waiting for death reduce. The researchers also found that religious attitudes reduce anxiety and depression far more than religious practices (William James and Gaeni, 1977).

In a study conducted on 175 patients with breast cancer, it was demonstrated that the level of mental health in women who were religious was higher. These women stated religiosity as the core motivation in their lives (O'Brien, 1998; quoted Rezaei et al., 2007).

In their study entitled "Religion lifestyle and mental health," Bergen et al. concluded that religious students who have had continuous religious growth seem healthier than those who have had discontinuous religious growth. In another interesting study entitled "Religiosity and mental health" by the same group, the correlation between religious guidance and anxiety, personality traits, self-control, irrational thoughts, and depression were evaluated. The overall results suggested a positive relationship between religiosity and anxiety, a negative relationship between religiosity and self-control, as well as between religiosity and better personality performance (Gobari Bonab, 2005).

The study by Laubmeier et al. showed that dealing with spirituality, despite a threatening factor of life in cancer patients, connection with less distress and better quality of life (Laubmeier et al. 2004; quoted Kashani et al., 2013).

The study by Balboni et al. showed that in cancer patients, spiritual support provided by religious associations or healthcare systems are connected to better quality of life and religious people tend to continue life more (Balboni et al., 2007; quoted Kashani et al., 2013).

Balboni found a significant correlation between spiritual in in

cancer patients with quality of life, so that the higher the level of spirituality in these patients, they can better can come along with the disease, issues related to it, and improvement process (Balboni et al., 2007; quoted Kashani et al., 2013).

**Research design**

The research is descriptive with respect to the objectives. The population consisted of all patients with cancer in the Department of Oncology of Hospital of Fasa. The sample in this study was 100 patients with cancer more than 20 years of age and with education to read and write.

Sampling in this study is non-random convenient.

**RESEARCH TOOLS**

In this study, spiritual health questionnaire by Palutzion and Elison and prayer questionnaire by Elison have been used.

The questionnaires reliability was determined by Cronbach's alpha: prayer questionnaire a: 0.79 and spiritual health questionnaire a: 0.82.

**METHODOLOGY**

In this study, after final approval of authorities, we referred to cancer patients, who were about 100 people older than 20 undergoing chemotherapy and have the ability to read and write and aware of the kind of their sickness, and by granting their consent about completing two questionnaires about spiritual health and prayer questionnaire, the study began. First, before distributing questionnaires, descriptions of how to complete them were given in a similar way to everyone, and they were asked to carefully complete all questionnaires. The study is qualitative regarding the nature of the data collection, fundamental concerning the purpose of the study, and it is correlational concerning the method.

In this study, data was analyzed by SPSS software. In this study, descriptive statistics (mean, standard deviation) and inferential statistics have been used, and for this purpose, the independent t-test and crystal varicose ANOVA have been used.

**Table 1: Indices of central tendency and dispersion of scores of research variables**

Variable	Frequency	Mean	Standard deviation	Variance	Minimum	Maximum
mental health	100	69.90	19.86	394.79	33	109
The frequency of prayer	100	62.88	20.02	400.85	21	101
Previous experience of prayer	100	27.64	12.76	163.04	10	59
Attitude to pray	100	22.02	11:52	132.72	7	42
The overall effect of prayer	100	112.54	38.35	1471.12	46	200

Average scores of variables can be seen in the table above.

**Table 2: Statistical indices related to the frequency of prayer, previous experience of prayer, attitude to prayer, and overall effect of with spiritual health**

Variables	Frequency	Mean	Standard deviation
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The frequency of prayer	100	62.88	20.02
Previous experience of prayer	100	27.64	12.76
Attitude to pray	100	22:02	11.50
The overall effect of prayer	100	112.54	38.35
Spiritual health	100	69.90	19.86

**Table 3: The results of the correlation matrix between two variables of frequency of prayer and spiritual health**

	The frequency of prayer	The significance level
Spiritual health	0.537	0.000
	Previous experience of prayer	The significance level
Spiritual health	0.822	0.000
	Attitude to pray	The significance level
Spiritual health	0.809	0.000
	The overall effect of prayer	The significance level
Spiritual health	0.797	0.000

As the above table shows that there is a positive significant relationship between the frequency of prayer and spiritual health of cancer patients ( $r = 0.537, p < 0.05$ ), previous experience of prayer and spiritual health of patients ( $r = 0.822, p < 0.05$ ), the attitude to prayer and spiritual health of patients ( $r = 0.809, p < 0.05$ ), and the overall effect of prayer and spiritual health of patients ( $r = 0.797, p < 0.05$ ). Thus, the null hypothesis is rejected and the hypothesis is confirmed.

**CONCLUSION**

Conclusion, findings, and offering suggestions are considered as the essential parts of the research that refer to the researcher's ability to analyze and discuss the results. Thus, in this chapter, we analyze the findings, and at the end of the limitations and restrictions are presented.

Spirituality is a lost chain and demand of humans throughout the world that is not time or place bound. Spirituality is a lost issue and demand of human throughout the world that is not bound to time and place. There is no single definition for spiritual health, and it is difficult to specify, explain, define, and measure its components and indicators. No doubt, complete meaning of spiritual health is not limited to prayers and spiritual states in healing diseases and its being a successor to current medical treatments or complementary medicine.

It is possible to believe that spiritual aspect has a deep impact on knowledge, beliefs, attitudes, values, and behavior and affects biochemistry and physiology of the body and this effect on mind, heart, soul, and body is called spiritual health. Definitions provided for spiritual health are based on knowledge defining ontological, epistemological, and religious beliefs in eternal nature of God and revelation. Researchers unwilling to heed the creator of man and non-sensory issues

had a general definition of spiritual health used in a lot of foreign papers and books and given as references by some religious scholars frequently (Abbasi *et al.*, 2013). Accordingly, in this study, given the importance of the prayer, we have tried to study the relationship between the effects of prayer and spiritual health of cancer patients.

The results of this study indicate that:

In examining the hypothesis regarding the existence of a relationship between the frequency of prayer and spiritual health, the results of Pearson correlation analysis showed that in the sample studied there is a significant association between these variables and the hypothesis is confirmed. This is consistent with the results of Hojati *et al.* (2009) and Seyed Fatemi *et al.* (2006).

Using the results of the statistics and previous studies, we can argue that the patient, whose spiritual health is strengthened, can effectively become compatible with their sickness and live even the later stages of their disease well. Therefore, religious and spiritual resources are important coping resources for cancer patients used during the disease process. These sources lead to compatibility with various effects of diagnosis and treatment, especially chemotherapy. These sources are related to personal satisfaction with life, better compatibility, easing the pain, and reducing anxiety associated with death.

Therefore, the protection of religious or spiritual resources and having a relationship with a higher power are effective and can be used to improve the quality of life, interpersonal support, reduce the severity of symptoms, and useful medical results. Here, among religious and spiritual resources, the most important source used is the frequency of praying.

Among the other results obtained in this study was a relationship between prior experience of prayer and attitude towards prayer with spiritual health of patients with cancer. The results of the Pearson test showed that there is a significant positive relationship between previous experience of prayer and spiritual health of cancer patients. This finding is consistent with the results from research by Farazmand *et al.* (2014) and Seyedfatemi *et al.* (2006). In explaining these findings, we can argue that prayer and connecting to the soul of the universe have many functions, lead to great effects, and amazing results. Prayer gives human spirit certain resilience, gives value and meaning to his life affairs because connection to the everlasting power of God is the only source of getting energy, and reinvigorates the missing spirit of man. Religious functions such as prayer, attending religious events, reading Koran, and other religious texts are effective in the prevention and reduction of mental disorders and related problems like suicide. In addition, they can provide the context for proper growth of certain personality traits such as high self-confidence, self-esteem, and sense of control over the circumstances of the people that will ultimately have a positive role in promotion of mental health and prevention of problems of this aspect of human life. Likewise, in their research, Khalili, Izanloo, Asayesh, and Abdullah Tabar showed that prayer is associated with mental health and the positive attitude to prayer and other spiritual and religious activities related to prayer can improve mental health.

Among the other results of the present study was the relationship between overall effect of prayer and spiritual health of cancer patients, where the results of the Pearson test showed a significant positive correlation between these two variables. In line with these findings, in a study of 20 cancer patients conducted in Norway, Neurom *et al.* (2003) found that belief in God and praying improve the spiritual health of these patients. In explaining this relationship, we can argue that one of the ways to mention and remembrance of God is prayer. The aware people know that the remembrance of God, trust in him, and prayer have better feeling better and will be more

successful. In Islamic teachings, the first step and the sign of mental health are faith, piety, and knowledge of the teachings of religion, because religion gives meaning to human life.

People who adhere to religious practices in the first place, increase their spiritual health and then could improve their mental health. In fact, these people interpret their disease in the general meaning of life and are less prone to mental health problems.

In summary, it should be argued that as the results of this and other studies in this area show, prayer and its positive effects on the lives of people who are in special circumstances, especially people suffering from hard diseases, could help them strengthen themselves mentally and provide the context for physical improvement as well.

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