

## Modern computer technologies facilitate communication with a young cancer patient

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### ABSTRACT

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**Aim.** The aim of this paper is to show how new technologies may help the communication process in clinical practice in a department providing supportive care to patients undergoing cancer treatment.

**Method.** Communication via Internet chat between the psychologist and a young man who sees chatting on the Internet as a natural and familiar mode of expression was shown to be useful.

**Results.** The Internet link enabled us to open a communication channel with the patient and to have a conversation that would otherwise have been impossible.

**Conclusions.** Although verbal communication is the most important way to communicate among people, Internet communications are certainly an opportunity worth exploring, because they may open up new channels for cancer patients whose ability to speak is restricted. We might imagine using this approach in pediatric oncology, with adolescents and preadolescents, and with young adults like the patient discussed here. The case discussed highlights the enormous difference between the mere transfer of information and genuine communication, the latter involving an encounter with the patient. Free full text available at [www.tumorionline.it](http://www.tumorionline.it)

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**Key words:** communication, supportive care in cancer, new technologies, Internet chat.

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