The HORIZON

VOLUME 3, ISSUE 4, APRIL 2025

DEAN'S DESK

DEAN OF FACULTY OF INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS
DR. ALEKSANDER ALEKSANDEROVICH STENKO

Dear students, we at Grodno State Medical University strive to provide students with top-quality education, but that's not it. GRSMU is also a hub for Scientific, Cultural, and Sports related activities. We wholeheartedly acknowledge that International students are an integral part of our university, and we take immense pride in that. Grodno State Medical University is glad to work with students from different countries and provide them with a stage to represent their nation and culture.

GRSMU celebrates its uniqueness in diversity, for in its true essence our university is a junction where students from various backgrounds and cultures come together as one big family. GRSMU has always encouraged students to explore further and beyond in every field they try their hands at. I hope that you like the novel concept of 'The Horizon' - a magazine that serves as a platform for the students to voice their opinions, share their takes and present their points of view.

'**The Horizon**' is a medium of extended communication where we can learn a lot from one another.
I highly appreciate this initiative and personally support it. I look forward to reading the interesting blogs written by you.

WELCOME TO THE HORIZON

DR. MEHUL H. SADADIWALA, FOUNDER, CLASS OF 2023

“We all have fascinating stories to share!” For the longest time, I have had this idea of starting a magazine. But not just any conventional magazine, one that shall serve as a platform for the students and alumni of International faculty at Grodno State Medical University to share their stories. A platform that enables students to share their takes on various curricular and extracurricular aspects of medicine. Thus, the idea of ‘**The Horizon’**, came to life.

‘The Horizon’ will be a creative intersection where students can freely give commentaries about Lifestyle, Culture, Productivity tips, and more. Throughout the years, many individuals at GrSMU have inculcated valuable skills and gained experience with a fair share of success in various disciplines. Maybe you run a successful YouTube channel or an educational website, or maybe you are a successful student-researcher or an educator, and so much more. 'The Horizon' enables students to share their personal experiences. The insights that you share will encourage other students to take further strides and explore future possibilities.

‘The Horizon’ is supported directly by the Dean of the International Faculty, and it will operate under the supervision of the International Students' Scientific Committee. Students from 1st to 6th year, and even graduates, can submit their blogs to this magazine. The articles should directly or indirectly revolve around student life to share knowledge and the collective growth of students.

For inquiries and submissions.
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EDITOR'S DESK

I'm Fathmath Shajaa Jihaad, a final year Medical student at Grodno State Medical University. As the Editor in Chief of The Horizon's Spring issue 2025, I would like to create a space where medical students can find balance, inspiration, and a sense of belonging, along with staying connected to the trends shaping the future of healthcare. I would like to make this magazine a platform that informs and inspires.

FATHMATH SHAJAA JIHAAD,
EDITOR, APR- JUN 2025

Hello! I'm a third-year medical student at GRSMU, and like many of you, I've always admired how The Horizon Magazine creates a vibrant space for students, bridging knowledge, creativity, and university life. Now, as your editor, I'm excited to carry forward this legacy by delivering insightful, engaging, and confidence-boosting content.

KISHNANI ROHANKUMAR SADHURAM,
EDITOR, APR-JUN 2025

And a message to our dearest readers, we would like to invite you all, students and alumni, to share with us the blogs that directly or indirectly revolve around student life, to share knowledge and experiences that has had an impact on your growth within and outside the bounds of our university.

Concluding, let us alter the limitations of our individual efforts and collectively explore limitless Horizons.

Cover Credits

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THE HORIZON
APRIL 2025

SLEEP DEPRIVATION AND BEDTIME PROCRASTINATION: A VICIOUS CYCLE?

THIS BLOG EXPLORES THE HARMFUL EFFECTS OF BEDTIME PROCRASTINATION AND WAYS TO TACKLE IT.

WRITTEN BY

RASHINE EMARA GUNATILAKE

CLASS OF 2025

INTRODUCTION

After a long day of classes, lectures and meetings, we as students tend to seek for that valuable "me" time, and unknowingly we compromise our sleep by staying up to catch up on the free time you didn't have during the day. In other words, you get "revenge" for your busy daytime schedule by fitting in leisure time at the expense of shut-eye. This procrastination can be either procrastinating getting into bed or procrastinating falling asleep after getting into bed. However, chronic sleep deprivation caused by bedtime procrastination can have serious health effects and impair academic performance.

CAUSES

Researchers have a few theories as to why some people knowingly sideline sleep for more free time. It could be that you're a night owl living in an early bird's world. Research showed that late chronotypes also known as evening types, or "owls"—are more prone to bedtime procrastination on workdays than early types, or "larks." Or maybe you're searching for easy stress relief after a busy day. Or perhaps you tend to procrastinate in general, meaning you put off doing important things. Some studies also link sleep procrastination to self-control, which you may have less of toward the end of the day.

Bedtime procrastination is also probably related to personality. For example, the 2014 paper by Kroese and her colleagues already suggested that there is a link between bedtime procrastination and self-control: individuals who had poorer self-regulation also reported more bedtime procrastination, the researchers wrote

IMPACT ON HEALTH

1.Cognitive Impairment and Poor Academic Performance:
Sleep deprivation reduces concentration, memory retention, and problem-solving abilities, which are crucial for medical students. A lack of restorative sleep hinders learning efficiency and academic success.

2.Increased Risk of Mental Health Issues:
Chronic bedtime procrastination is linked to higher levels of stress, anxiety, and depression. Sleep deprivation exacerbates emotional instability and reduces resilience to academic and personal challenges.

3.Physical Health Consequences:
Persistent sleep loss weakens the immune system, increases the risk of cardiovascular diseases, and disrupts metabolic functions. Medical students engaging in bedtime procrastination may experience frequent illnesses and fatigue.

4.Daytime Sleepiness and Burnout:
Poor sleep quality leads to excessive daytime sleepiness, making it difficult to stay alert during lectures, clinical rounds, and exams. Over time, this contributes to burnout, reducing motivation and overall performance.

HOW TO OVERCOME BED TIME PROCRASTINATION

1. Prioritize sleep hygiene:
Setting a fixed bedtime and wake-up time helps regulate the body's internal clock. Medical students should aim for at least 7 hours of sleep each night and avoid shifting their schedule drastically on weekends. Avoid caffeine and heavy meals before bedtime. Keep the bedroom environment conducive to sleep—dark, quiet, and cool.

2. Limit Screen Time Before Bed:
Set screen-time limits and enable "Do Not Disturb" mode on devices at night.Exposure to blue light from phones, tablets, and laptops suppresses melatonin production, delaying sleep onset. Avoiding screens at least 30–60 minutes before bed can significantly improve sleep quality.

3. Prioritize Time Management and Self-Care:
Effective time management throughout the day reduces the urge to reclaim personal time at night. Scheduling leisure activities earlier in the day can prevent the need for "revenge bedtime procrastination. Use a planner or digital scheduling apps to allocate study time efficiently. Break study sessions into manageable intervals using techniques like the Pomodoro method. Set realistic daily goals to avoid last-minute cramming.

4. Create a Relaxing Pre-Bedtime Routine:
Engaging in calming activities such as reading, meditating, or taking a warm shower signals the body to wind down. Avoiding stimulants like caffeine and heavy meals close to bedtime also promotes better sleep.

5. Optimize the Sleep Environment:
A cool, dark, and quiet bedroom encourages restful sleep. Using blackout curtains, white noise machines, or comfortable bedding can enhance sleep quality.

6. Set Boundaries and Self-Discipline:
Recognize the importance of sleep and commit to prioritizing it. Avoid excessive commitments that interfere with rest. Develop self-awareness about bedtime procrastination habits and take gradual steps to modify them.

7. Adopt a Balanced Lifestyle:
Incorporate regular physical activity into daily routines to promote better sleep. Maintain a nutritious diet that supports overall well-being. Seek social support and communicate with peers or mentors about academic challenges.

CONCLUSION

Sleep is one of the three pillars of health, along with good nutrition and exercise. Yet encouraging restful sleep is often overlooked as a way to improve our physical and mental well-being.

Bedtime procrastination is a significant concern for medical students, affecting both academic performance and overall health. Identifying its causes and taking proactive steps to overcome it can lead to better sleep hygiene, improved mental and physical well-being, and enhanced productivity. By prioritizing time management, reducing distractions, and fostering a disciplined sleep routine, medical students can break the cycle of bedtime procrastination and achieve a healthier work-life balance

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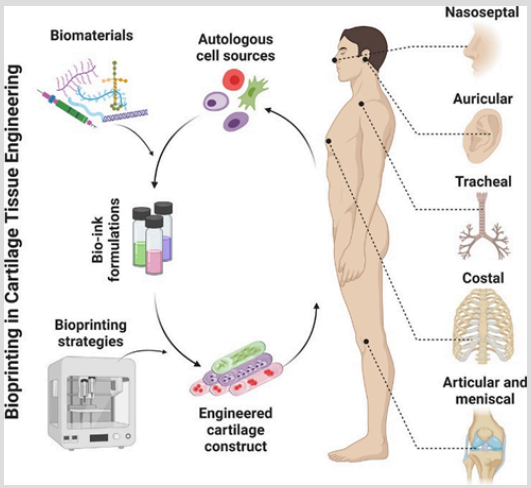
THE ROLE OF BIOPRINTING IN HEART TRANSPLANTATION: CREATING FUNCTIONAL CARDIAC TISSUE

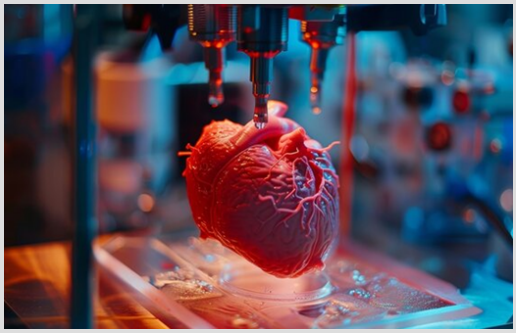
BIOPRINTING OFFERS A REVOLUTIONARY APPROACH TO OVERCOMING THE SHORTAGE OF DONOR HEARTS AND RISKS OF IMMUNE REJECTION IN HEART TRANSPLANTS. BY LAYERING BIOINKS CONTAINING LIVING CELLS, THIS TECHNOLOGY AIMS TO CREATE FUNCTIONAL CARDIAC TISSUE, THOUGH CHALLENGES LIKE VASCULARIZATION REMAIN CRITICAL. RECENT MILESTONES, SUCH AS 3D-PRINTED VASCULARIZED HEART PATCHES, HIGHLIGHT PROGRESS TOWARD BIOENGINEERED HEARTS. CONTINUED ADVANCEMENTS COULD TRANSFORM HEART DISEASE TREATMENT, PROVIDING LIFE-SAVING ALTERNATIVES TO TRADITIONAL TRANSPLANTS.

WRITTEN BY
MOHAMED NAJEEM MOHAMED SABRAN
CLASS OF 2025

INTRODUCTION

Heart disease remains a leading cause of mortality worldwide, with heart transplantation being the gold standard for end-stage heart failure. However, the shortage of donor organs, coupled with the risks of immune rejection and long-term immunosuppression, has driven the search for alternative solutions. Bioprinting, a cutting-edge technology that combines 3D printing with tissue engineering, has emerged as a promising approach to address these challenges. This article explores the role of bioprinting in creating functional cardiac tissue, the challenges of vascularizing printed hearts, and the potential for developing fully functional 3D-printed hearts as a future alternative to traditional heart transplantation.



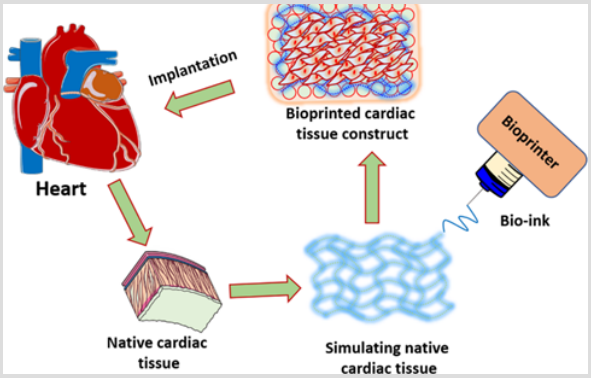


BIOPRINTING OF CARDIAC TISSUE

Bioprinting involves the layer-by-layer deposition of bioinks—biocompatible materials containing living cells—to create three-dimensional structures that mimic native tissues. In the context of cardiac tissue, bioprinting aims to replicate the complex architecture and functionality of the heart. The process typically begins with the creation of a digital model based on imaging data, such as MRI or CT scans, which guides the precise placement of cells and biomaterials.

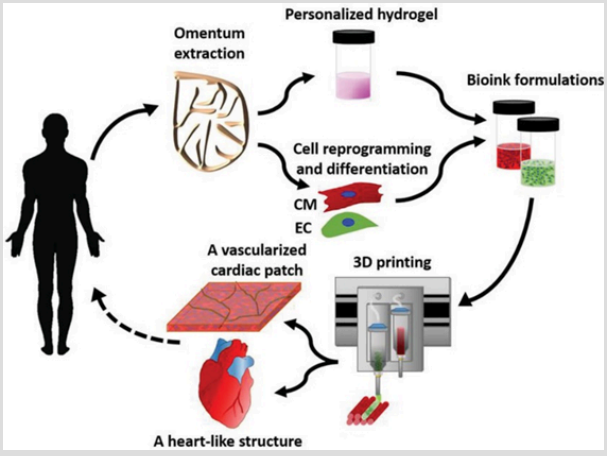
Several types of cells are used in cardiac bioprinting, including cardiomyocytes, fibroblasts, and endothelial cells. These cells are often combined with hydrogels, such as alginate or gelatin, which provide structural support and mimic the extracellular matrix of the heart.

Recent advancements have enabled the printing of cardiac patches—small sections of heart tissue that can be used to repair damaged areas of the heart. These patches have shown promise in preclinical studies, demonstrating the ability to integrate with host tissue and improve cardiac function (Duan, 2017

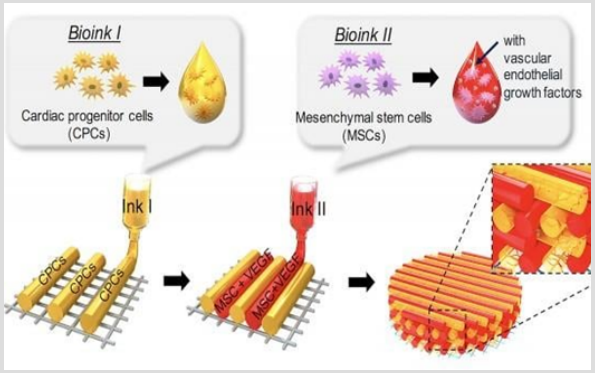


VASCULARIZATION OF PRINTED HEARTS

One of the most significant challenges in bioprinting functional cardiac tissue is achieving adequate vascularization—the formation of blood vessels that supply oxygen and nutrients to the tissue. The heart is a highly vascularized organ, and without a functional vascular network, bioprinted tissues cannot survive or function properly. Current strategies to address this issue include the incorporation of endothelial cells into the bioink, which can self-assemble into capillary-like structures, and the use of sacrificial materials to create channels that can later be lined with endothelial cells (Zhang et al., 2017).



Another approach involves the use of microfluidic systems to create vascular networks within the bioprinted tissue. These systems allow for the precise control of fluid flow, enabling the formation of complex vascular structures that can support the survival and function of the printed tissue. Despite these advancements, achieving the level of vascularization required for a fully functional 3D-printed heart remains a significant hurdle (Murphy & Atala, 2014).



THE FUTURE OF HEART TRANSPLANT ALTERNATIVES

The ultimate goal of cardiac bioprinting is to create a fully functional, 3D-printed heart that can be used as a transplant alternative. While this goal is still in the early stages of development, significant progress has been made in recent years. In 2019, researchers at Tel Aviv University successfully printed a small, vascularized heart using a patient's own cells, marking a major milestone in the field (Noor et al., 2019). However, the printed heart was not fully functional and was unable to beat on its own.

Looking ahead, several key challenges must be addressed to realize the potential of bioprinted hearts. These include improving the resolution and scalability of bioprinting technologies, enhancing the maturation and functionality of printed cardiac tissue, and ensuring the long-term survival and integration of bioprinted hearts in vivo. Additionally, regulatory and ethical considerations will need to be addressed as bioprinted organs move closer to clinical application.

CONCLUSION

Bioprinting holds immense promise for revolutionizing the field of heart transplantation by providing a potential solution to the shortage of donor organs and the challenges associated with immune rejection. While significant progress has been made in the bioprinting of cardiac tissue and the development of vascular networks, several challenges remain before fully functional 3D-printed hearts can become a reality.

Continued research and collaboration across disciplines will be essential to overcome these challenges and bring the vision of bioprinted hearts to fruition. As the field advances, bioprinting has the potential to transform the treatment of heart disease and offer new hope to patients in need of life-saving transplants

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HYDRATION BEFORE MEALS: A SIMPLE STRATEGY FOR WEIGHT LOSS?

This blog explores the science behind pre-meal hydration and it's aid in weight loss.

WRITTEN BY

K.D.U.I. WASUDEVA

CLASS OF 2026

INTRODUCTION

Water is essential for many physiological functions, including digestion, circulation, and temperature regulation. Beyond these fundamental roles, emerging research suggests that drinking water before meals may serve as a simple and effective strategy for weight management.

MECHANISMS LINKING PRE-MEAL WATER CONSUMPTION TO WEIGHT LOSS

Increased Fullness and Reduced Calorie Intake:
Drinking water before meals may help people feel fuller, reducing the amount of food they consume. This occurs because water takes up space in the stomach, triggering stretch receptors that signal satiety to the brain. Studies indicate that consuming water before a meal may decrease hunger, leading individuals to eat less during their meal.

Boosting Metabolism:
Water, especially when cold, requires the body to expend energy to warm it up, a process known as thermogenesis. This slight increase in energy expenditure may contribute to overall calorie burning.

While the effect is relatively small, consistent water consumption throughout the day may lead to gradual increases in daily energy expenditure, supporting long-term weight management.

Replacing High-Calorie Beverages:
Drinking water instead of sugary or high-calorie beverages reduces overall energy intake. Many commercially available drinks contain added sugars and fats, which can lead to weight gain if consumed in excess.

Improved Digestion and Nutrient Absorption:
Water plays a vital role in digestion by aiding in the breakdown of food and facilitating nutrient absorption. Drinking water before meals can support the digestive process, ensuring that the body efficiently processes nutrients while minimizing bloating and discomfort that may occur after eating.

SCIENTIFIC EVIDENCE ON PRE-MEAL HYDRATION AND WEIGHT LOSS

Appetite Control and Reduced Intake:
A study published in Obesity found that participants who drank 500 milliliters of water before each meal consumed fewer calories and lost more weight than those who did not. The authors attributed this effect to enhanced satiety and a reduction in overall energy intake

Effects on Metabolism:
A separate study published in The Journal of Clinical Endocrinology & Metabolism observed that drinking 500 milliliters of water increased metabolic rate by approximately 30% for about 30–40 minutes. This suggests that regular water intake may contribute to increased daily calorie expenditure

Long-Term Benefits:
A review of dietary habits found that individuals who consistently drank more water tended to consume fewer calories from sugary beverages and processed foods. Over time, this reduction in calorie intake was linked to lower body weight and improved metabolic health

Pre-Meal Water and Obesity Prevention:
Another study assessed the impact of increased water consumption on body weight over an extended period. It found that individuals who regularly drank water before meals had a lower risk of developing obesity. The researchers concluded that incorporating pre-meal hydration into daily habits could be an effective, non-invasive weight management strategy.

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WAYS TO ACHIEVE THE OPTIMAL EFFECT

Drink Water Before Each Meal:
Consuming 500 milliliters (about 17 ounces) of water 30 minutes before meals can help regulate appetite and support digestion.

Monitor Daily Hydration:
Total daily water intake varies based on individual factors such as body weight, activity level, and climate. General guidelines suggest around eight 8-ounce glasses per day, but personal needs may differ.

Pair Hydration with Healthy Eating:
Drinking water alone is unlikely to lead to significant weight loss unless combined with a nutrient-rich diet. Whole food like vegetables, lean proteins, and whole grains should be prioritized. Avoiding excessive processed food and high-sugar snacks can enhance the benefits of pre-meal hydration.

Adjust Based on Individual Response:
Some individuals may experience bloating or discomfort when consuming large amounts of water before meals. Adjusting water intake based on personal tolerance is essential.

STAY CONSISTENT

CONCLUSION

Pre-meal hydration is a simple and accessible strategy that may aid in weight loss by increasing satiety, enhancing metabolism, and reducing overall calorie intake. While research supports its benefits, it should be implemented alongside other healthy lifestyle choices for optimal results.

By making water consumption a regular habit, individuals may find it easier to manage their weight while also supporting overall well-being. Additionally, the practice of drinking water before meals is cost-effective and easy to incorporate into daily routines, making it an excellent tool for weight management and overall health improvement.

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NAVIGATING THE UNCERTAINTY

Life is a perpetual puzzle, with pieces constantly shifting and new challenges emerging around every corner. Each day brings with it a multitude of decisions, choices, and uncertainties that test one's resolve, resilience, and capacity for growth. This journal mainly discusses how to navigate the uncertainty of the future as a medical student..

WRITTEN BY

STEPHANIE ASHOK KUMAR
CLASS OF 2025

INTRODUCTION

As a medical student, life is a perpetual puzzle, with pieces constantly shifting and new challenges emerging around every corner. Each day brings with it a multitude of decisions, choices, and uncertainties that test one's resolve, resilience, and capacity for growth. Having succeeded in being selected for medical school, medical students are not always familiar with failure and yet they are expected to graduate prepared to effectively function in the failure-burdened arena of clinical medicine.

This journey is like navigating a complex puzzle. Each piece represents a different aspect of education and personal growth, from mastering medical knowledge and clinical skills to developing empathy and communication abilities. We face daily challenges that can feel overwhelming, whether it's studying for exams, balancing clinical rotations, or managing our personal lives. Each decision we make impacts not only our education but also the well-being of future patients.

The uncertainty we all encounter is an important part of the learning process. Medicine is an ever-evolving field, and staying consistent is the key. Embracing this uncertainty can foster a mindset of resilience, allowing us to learn from mistakes and setbacks, which are inevitable in such a demanding environment.

Our brains crave predictability because it helps us feel safe. When faced with uncertainty, the amygdala—the part of the brain responsible for detecting threats—triggers a fight-or-flight response. This releases stress hormones like cortisol and adrenaline, which heighten anxiety, impair concentration, and disrupt sleep. Even positive changes, such as a promotion or a new relationship, can cause stress because they require us to adapt to something new.

THE BENEFITS OF EMBRACING UNCERTAINTY

One of the biggest benefits of embracing uncertainty in learning and development is that it allows us to be more open to new experiences and perspectives. When we are open to the unknown and willing to take risks, we are more likely to try new things and challenge ourselves to grow. This can be especially important in the field medicine that is constantly evolving.

Another benefit of embracing uncertainty in learning and development is that it helps us to become more creative and innovative. When we are faced with a problem or challenge that we don’t know how to solve, we are forced to think outside the box and come up with new and creative solutions. This can be a very powerful tool in both personal and professional settings.

SETTING GOALS AND ESTABLISHING CLEAR EXPECTATIONS

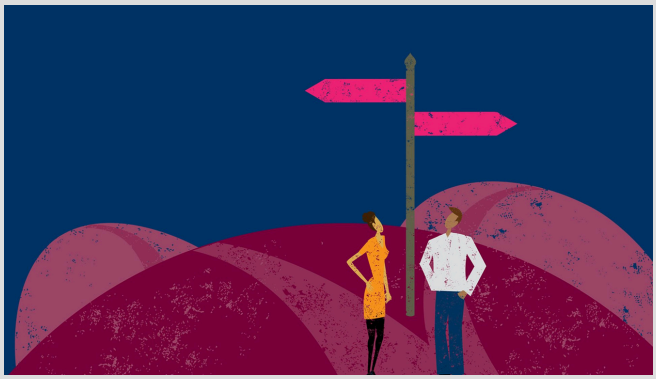
Setting goals and establishing clear expectations are important for a number of reasons. Firstly, they provide direction and focus.

When we have clear goals and expectations, we know what we are working towards and can more easily stay motivated and on track. When we have specific objectives in mind, we know exactly what we are working towards and can stay motivated and focused.

Clear expectations also help to manage and reduce uncertainty, as we have a clear understanding of what is expected of us and what the end result should look like.Not only do setting goals and establishing clear expectations help us to stay motivated and focused, but they can also improve communication and collaboration within a team or group.When everyone has a shared understanding of what is expected, it is easier to work together effectively and achieve success.

SEEKING SUPPORT AND GUIDANCE FROM MENTORS OR PEERS

It is important to note that seeking out support and guidance does not imply a lack of self-sufficiency or capability. By seeking out the insights and experiences of others, we can avoid common pitfalls and make more informed decisions. In addition to the practical benefits of seeking out support and guidance, there are also psychological benefits to be gained. Receiving support and guidance can boost our confidence and motivation, as it can validate our efforts and provide encouragement to keep going



THE POTENTIAL DOWNSIDES OF UNCERTAINTY

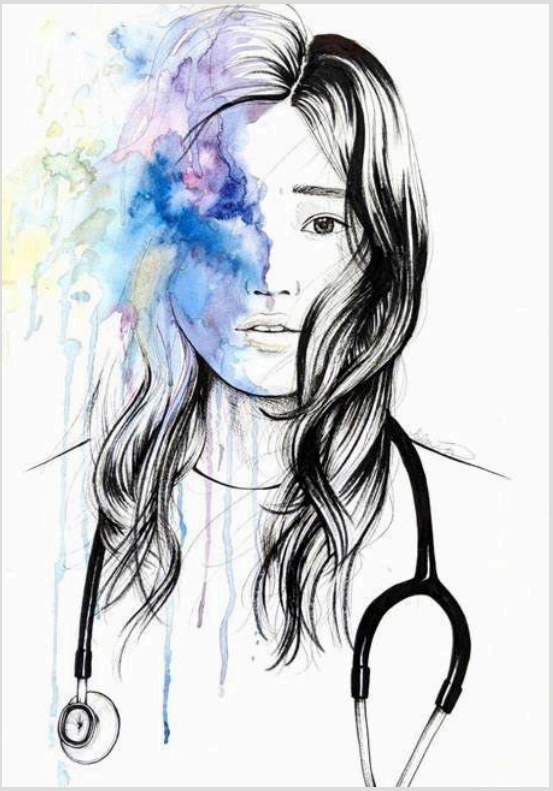
While uncertainty can be a powerful motivator, it is important to manage it effectively to prevent overwhelming learners. Excessive uncertainty can lead to anxiety and disengagement, undermining the learning process. Therefore, striking the right balance is crucial

Abraham Maslow wrote, "all the evidence that we have (mostly clinical evidence, but already some other kinds of research evidence) indicates that it is reasonable to assume in practically every human being, and certainly in almost every newborn baby, that there is an active will toward health, an impulse toward growth, or toward the actualization of human potentialities".

Changes in the health care system have had an enormous impact on the medical school clinical enterprise.

It is natural to experience stress and anxiety in the face of uncertainty, as it is a common human fear to be faced with unknown and unpredictable situations. However, it is important to recognize that uncertainty is a natural and inevitable part of life, and the ability to effectively manage stress and anxiety in the face of it is a valuable skill to cultivate. One effective way to manage stress and anxiety in the face of uncertainty is to focus on what we can control.This can include setting clear goals and priorities, creating a plan of action, and taking small, consistent steps towards achieving them.

It is also interesting to note that uncertainty can have different effects on different people. While some people may feel anxious and stressed in the face of uncertainty, others may feel excited and motivated. This may be due to individual differences in personality and coping styles.



CONCLUSION

Moreover, the diversity of experiences—interacting with patients, collaborating with peers, and learning from mentors—adds depth to our understanding of medicine and humanity. Each interaction is a chance to piece together a more comprehensive view of health and illness, and of the human experience itself.

Ultimately, the journey is about growth—both as a future physician and as an individual. Embrace the challenges, seek support when needed, and remember that every small victory contributes to the larger picture of your medical career. Each day brings us closer to becoming a skilled and compassionate healthcare provider, ready to tackle the complexities of patient care.

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