

Quality of Life in Gynecological Cancer Patients: A Review

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Abstract

Diagnosis of Gynecological cancer and their associated treatment management may be hurting experiences for woman being a patient and family because as primary caregiver (mother /wife) are sick. Also significantly effect on her physical, family, sexual, social, emotional and functional well being. This all combined things promote the burden, physical fatigue, pain; lack of social support and changes within the relationship this affects the quality of life. Hence, addressing these nuanced requirements must take precedence. Patients with gynecological cancer must have access to and use different interventions to improve their quality of life. This paper will discuss some of the interventions that have been put into place to help gynecologic cancer patients with their physical, family, social, emotional, and functional problems, as well as provide a brief overview of the proper evaluation tools for understanding the changes in Quality of Life of these patients.

1. Introduction

Cancer statistics and death projections for 185 countries are available from GLOBOCAN 2020, an online database. In 2020, "it was predicted that there will be 19.3 million new cases of cancer and about 10 million deaths from cancer over the world." According to projections made on its Oncology Tomorrow website, GLOBOCAN projects that cancer incidence will grow by 47%, reaching just over 434,000 cases, and cancer mortality would increase by about 59%, reaching over 293,000 cases, by the year 2040.¹

Cancer of the ovary, cervix, or vagina is referred to as gynecologic cancer. Risk variables such as poverty level, lifestyle, heredity, family history, excess weight, advanced age, and human papillomavirus (HPV) all play a role in determining how common gynecological cancers are in any given country. Women are more likely to acquire gynecological cancer if they experience this.²

According to the International Institute for Research on Cancer's complete global cancer data, gynecologic malignancies were responsible for 5 million new cases

of cancer and approximately 3 million deaths among women globally in 2021.³

"There will likely be 604,000 new instances of cervical cancer in 2020, making it the fourth most common malignancy in women worldwide." And over 313,000 reported cases with 207,252 (4.2) fatalities of ovarian cancer in 2020; 65,950 anticipated new cases of uterine body (uterine body or corpus) cancer detected; 12,550 women die from uterine body cancer in 2020-21; nearly 90% of occurrences have happened in middle- and low-income countries.^{4,5,6}

2. Methods

Quality of life of gynecological cancer: Medical conditions and treatments may have varying effects on patients' physical, mental, and social health, which together make up their "quality of life." The maximum possible quality of life for cancer patients requires careful consideration of not just the illness itself, but also the patients' emotional and social needs (QoL). "The goal of this research is to evaluate the effectiveness of nursing treatments aimed at enhancing the quality of life of women with gynecological cancer".⁷

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Search engines and time period: CINAHL, Medline (PubMed), Scopus, Researchgate, and the Google scholar were used to identify relevant studies. Review publications that focus on enhancing QoL for women with cervix (gynecological) cancer were sought using a supplementary search of the dbCerEx: A Internet Database. This article provides a comprehensive analysis of articles published in English linguistic Oncology journals from January 1, 2015 to December 31, 2021.^{8,9,10}

“This is study used comprehensive evidence map of over-view of systematic reviews introduced” by Lunny et al.¹¹ Review papers alone were sought for after searching for the terms "quality of life" and "interventions to enhance quality of life" in the titles of relevant publications about gynecological cancer. The review's starting point data is given here. We also conducted a thorough search for any supplementary sources. The following were used as keywords and as a search strategy: (cancer of the uterus and ovaries [Title/Abstract]) life satisfaction [caption] AND [subtitle] Reviews; Publication dates between 2015/01/01 and 2021/12/31; Languages other than English.

Overall outlook of the reviews: There is a dearth of recent meta-analyses and systematic reviews focusing on how to "increase QOL in gynecological cancer patients." Yet, in order to synthesize the information, the reviews were grouped into the following broad categories: reviews on the rationale behind improving gynecological cancer patients' quality of life, as well as reviews on the effects of a variety of interventions designed to achieve just that.

I. Studies focusing on QOL

Quality of life measurement-Instruments used : Quality of life measures for women with gynecological cancer were the subject of 17 systematic reviews. There are three main families of musical instruments: Most frequently cited review The shortened version of the WHO's Life Quality Questionnaire (WHOQOL-BREF). EQ-5D is the European Life Quality Questionnaire for Research Therapy (EORTC QLQ-C30) “The most popular surveys were the Functional Assessment of Cancer Treatment-General and the Functional Evaluation of Chronic Illness Therapy (FACIT) (FACT-G)”.¹²

Quality of life tools developed specifically for patients with cervical cancer were evaluated. “The Life Quality Instruments for Cancer Patients–Cervical Cancer, the Practical Assessment of Cancer Therapy–Cervix (FACT-Cx)”, and the EORTC Life Quality Questionnaire–Cervix–24 questions (QLQ-Cx24) made up this group (QLICP-CE). Two of the few QOL measures that have been examined are the Cancer Rehab Evaluation System Short Form and the Medical Outcomes Study Short Form (SF-36) (CARES-SF).^{13,14,15}

II. Studies focusing on Treatment

Different treatment modalities and Quality of Life in gynecological cancer patient – Altun I et al. conducted survey in that included 87 carcinoma patients undergoing their first cycle of chemotherapy to survey the most common side effects of chemotherapy. Among the frequently experienced side effects is fatigue 74.7%, Vomiting and nausea rate was 79.9% while more than 50% of patients reported loss of appetite 65.5%, taste changes 60.9%, hair loss 60.0%, and constipation 51.7%.¹⁶

After analyzing the quality of life (QoL) scores of cervical cancer patients who had had initial therapy, the researchers came to the conclusion that QoL scores were lower for patients who had undergone treatment with various treatments compared to those who had undergone surgery alone. (Thapa N et al., 2018).¹⁷ According to the findings of the Fang study, the therapy of gynecologic malignancies is often multi-modal and is linked to high morbidity and alterations in reproductive function, all of which may induce emotional and psychological suffering in addition to physical symptoms. (Penny Fang et al., 2015).¹⁸

III. Studies focusing on intervention to improve Quality of Life in gynecological cancer patient –

“Comprehensive physical and psychological nursing treatments in hospital & home care services have been shown to improve the standard of living in gynecologic cancer survivors,” according to a literature analysis based on a search of multiple journals using internet databases (I Maryati et al., 2019).¹⁹ “A total of 153 women with gynecological cancer who were receiving treatment were included in

a recent meta-analysis of 4 studies to assess the quality of life related to cervical and ovarian cancer. Researchers found that women undergoing treatment for gynecological cancer need a wide range of palliative services.” (Riska Hediya Putria et al., 2018).²⁰ “Studies on the effects of psychoeducational treatments on sexual functioning, quality of life, and mental health found that they reduced depressed symptoms and improved mental health.” (Chow et al., 2016).²¹

Interventions for improve the quality of life of gynecologic cancer patient

Intervention for Physical well being : 1. Breathing Exercises - Mulhaeriah et al. reported that around 56% of cancer patients experienced fatigue due to chemotherapy and reduced quality of life, 28% of patients faced physical and financial difficulties, fatigue prevented them from doing their work, and 31% of patients had to be absent from work for one or two days a week also they had difficulty in walking and climbing stairs, 59% of patients had psychological problems due to sexual impairment. Difficulty in social relations with friends. Studies have concluded that the breathing exercise interventions helps to relax the mind and body, which helps improve oxygen transfer to tissues and facilitates the relaxation response, stimulating blood circulation.²²

2. Guided imaginary therapy - When combined with deep breathing and meditation, guided imagery may be an effective method for enhancing one's emotional state with no effort. As you're breathing deeply, it might help to think of a calm place, either real or imagined. This intervention is effective and feasible in helping to reduce mindfulness and improve positive thinking (Cancer Care® 1 March 2016)²³

Shu-Fen Chen (2015) concluded Breast cancer patients who used relaxation techniques like Guided Imagery reported less anxiety and sadness. The study used a randomized controlled trial using a two-group, pre- and post-test, quasi-experimental design. 65 breast cancer patients from a single Taiwanese hospital participated in the research. The patients were split evenly between the experimental (n = 32) and control (n = 33) groups. All groups were given information on how to care for themselves while

undergoing chemotherapy, but the experimental class also learned how to unwind using guided imagery.

Patients who were given guided imagery for relaxation reported lower levels of physical or psychological discomfort following chemotherapy, indicating that 7 days of daily 20-minute sessions helped patients regain better symptom management. Other research that looked at the long-term effects of guided imagery for relaxing corroborate these findings.²⁴

3. Home based exercises - Treatment and supportive care for cancer patients and survivors increasingly include exercise activities. Helping People Get Along and Stay Healthy The purpose of this descriptive literature review was to locate and assess the quality of research on the health benefits of HB exercise programs for cancer survivors. Patients & cancer survivors are increasingly receiving exercise therapies as part of their therapy and supportive care. Exercise therapies have been shown to provide physical and psychological advantages that may lessen the impact of cancer therapy in prior systematic studies. (HRQOL) of physical and immunological function, and decreased tiredness and sadness are only some of the advantages.²⁵

4. Peer support: To that end, this study details the strategy for a multi-site (RCT) of an innovative intervention package that combines individualized professional nurse consultations with telephone peer support. Both nurse-led consultations and peer telephone help were intertwined in the psychological intervention. Three hundred and six people were randomly assigned to either standard care or standard care plus the intervention. Baseline, date 1 of radiotherapy, and 1, 6, and 12 months postradiation were all gathered for the study's outcome measures. Pilot results indicated that the suggested intervention was beneficial and well-received by both patients and healthcare providers. (Penelope Schofield et al 2013)²⁶

Intervention for Emotional Well Being

5. Educational intervention : Nursing care for people with cervical cancer, in the guise of a preventative health initiative. Via health promotion, the program's services span the duration of a patient's time in the hospital, including admission, discharge

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planning, and post-discharge follow-up. (I Maryati1 2018)¹⁹ This is consistent with the nursing responsibilities of providing care, teaching, facilitating, collaborating, advocating, and coordinating. Health promotion was used in this research to play the function of educator, and it helped patients with cervical cancer greatly. (Li J, Huang J et al 2016).²⁷

Intervention for Functional Well Being

6. Maintain hobby: An increase in leisure time, defined as "time not devoted to required activities like employment, self-care, or sleep," has been shown to have good effects on quality of life and resilience in the face of stress. This is particularly true for women. It has been shown that engaging in leisure activities with a terminal disease like cancer improves quality of life by providing a sense of meaning and purpose, teaching coping mechanisms, and fostering social support. (Bethany Lynn 2019).²⁸

3. Conclusion

"It was concluded that relaxation therapies, home care education exercise efficiently improved the quality of life on gynecologic cancer patients."³⁰ The existing literature shows that interventions have efficacy for symptom management in gynecological cancer patient is emerging, especially for physical, psychological and social function. Most studies capturing exposure information from 10 or more years ago.

We found research gaps after analyzing previous studies, and we're now putting our attention where it needs to be: on new studies that will enable integration and the introduction of new interventions to better the life experiences of gynecological cancer patients in response to shifting lifestyle & associated factors.

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