

QUALITY OF LIFE AND SUPPORTIVE CARE IN WOMEN WITH BREAST CANCER

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Introduction: During past 4 decades, increased incidence of breast cancer made it most prevalent malignancy among Iranian women. The diagnosis of breast cancer is very stressful event having extensive impact on different aspects of daily life. Hence, being affected by breast cancer is very important among women, as the disease influences various dimensions of their quality of life. One of the essential roles of nurses, as an important care element, is to provide support for women with breast cancer.

Purpose: Due to soaring incidence of breast cancer and the importance of supportive care and quality of life assessments, the nursing supportive care and its relation with the quality of life, was studied in this research.

Methods: The present research was intended to evaluate the correlation among 100 women with breast cancer. Sampling was based on objective, and data was gathered by a questionnaire consisting of 3 parts: socio demographic and clinical characteristics, quality of life and nursing supportive care.

The tool for the evaluation of quality of life was the combination of SF36, Swedish Health Related Quality of Life, and cancer patient's quality of life instrument, assessing physical, mental and social aspects.

The supportive care questionnaire was a self prepared tool for the assessment of informational, emotional and physical support. The gathered data was analyzed with SPSS statistical software (version 14), and statistical tests: χ^2 test, Fisher exact test, independent T test, scatter plot diagram and descriptive statistics were conducted.

Results: Findings showed that majority (63.5%) of the patients were subject to average supportive care. Viewpoints of patients on physical support in 51.2% and informational support in 58.6% scored average. Whereas emotional support in (56.6%) was desirable.

Overall quality of life was undesirable in 52.5% of the women. In physical dimension, majority (52.5%) and in mental dimension (64.6%) scored undesirable.

But in social dimension, majority (52%) had desirable quality of life.

Nursing supportive care had a direct and significant correlation with quality of life ($R= 0.2$, $P< 0.05$).

Conclusion: Cancer and its treatment influence all physical, mental, social and spiritual dimensions of person. The end results got from this study can help nurses in their supportive care. By means of improved supportive care, nurses can promote the quality of life of breast cancer patients.

Keywords: Breast Cancer, Supportive Care, Quality of Life, viewpoints of women.