Quality of life after treatment

Impact of Cervical Cancer on Quality of Life and Sexual Functioning of Filipino Patients who Underwent Definitive Chemoradiation in the University of Santo Tomas Hospital, Manila, Philippines

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Introduction/Background Cervical cancer is a serious health problem, with nearly 500,000 women developing the disease each year worldwide. The burden of disease of cervical cancer in the Philippines as a developing nation is high. Its incidence rate has persisted from the 1980s up to the present with an annual age-standardized rate of 22.5 cases per 100,000 women. Of the thousands of Filipino women who are diagnosed with cervical cancer, 56% will die within 5 years from the diagnosis.

The aim of this study was to determine the quality of life (QoL) and sexual functioning of Filipino patients with cervical cancer on first consult, 3 months, and 6 months of completion of definitive chemoradiation.

Methodology The study is a 2-year prospective longitudinal observational study. Patients were assessed for QoL and sexual functioning on first consult, 3 months, and 6 months of completion of chemoradiation using the European Organization for Research and Treatment of Cancer (EORTC) QoL Questionnaire QLQ-C30 and EORTC (QLQ-CX24), respectively.

Results Fifty five patients were included for the analysis, and the mean age at the time of the interview was 52 years. Six months after the definitive chemoradiation, patients showed improved global health status/QoL and better physical role, cognitive, and emotional functioning than first day of treatment. Patients updated lower recurrence of symptoms. As to the sexual functioning impact of definitive chemoradiation on patients with cervical cancer, the patients experienced more problems with sexual activity and sexual enjoyment. Moreover, it is reported that all sexual function scales are correlated with health status of patients 6 months after treatment.

Conclusion This paper aided the health care providers to have a better understanding of the QoL and sexual functioning of cervical cancer patients who deal with its treatment sequelae. In addition, this will help counsel cervical cancer patients on what they could expect in a long term since definitive chemoradiation will have a great impact on their QoL. Furthermore, this study will also contribute on how to improve further research for Filipino women with cervical cancer.

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