

Symptom Clusters and Relationships to Symptom Interference with Daily Life in Taiwanese Lung Cancer

Patients

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摘要

Abstract

The number one cause of cancer death in Taiwan is lung cancer. Of the few studies describing the experience of patients living with lung cancer, most use bivariate analyses to test associations between individual symptoms. Few have systematically investigated multiple symptoms. This prospective study was undertaken to explore the phenomenon of symptom distress, to investigate the presence of symptom clusters, and to examine the relationship of symptom clusters to symptom interference with daily life in Taiwanese lung cancer patients. A sample of 108 lung cancer patients was recruited using the Taiwanese version of the M. D. Anderson Symptom Inventory. Data were analyzed by hierarchical cluster analysis, factor analysis, Pearson correlation, t-test, and regression analysis. The top five most-severe symptoms were fatigue, sleep disturbance, lack of appetite, shortness of breath, and general distress. Factor analysis generated a two-factor solution (general and gastrointestinal symptoms) for symptom severity items. Consistent with the result from factor analysis, cluster analysis also indicated the same two cluster groups (general and gastrointestinal symptoms). Both clusters were significantly correlated with symptom interference items; however, the general symptom cluster presented higher correlation coefficients than did the gastrointestinal symptom cluster. These results provide an important basis for developing novel strategies to manage multiple symptoms in lung cancer patients and thereby improve their well-being.