

Symptom Distress, Catastrophic Thinking, and Hope in Nasopharyngeal Carcinoma Patients

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摘要

Abstract

The purposes of this study were to explore symptom distress, catastrophic thinking (catastrophizing) and hope, and factors predicting hope in Taiwanese nasopharyngeal carcinoma (NPC) patients within 3 years of receiving radiation therapy (RT). Instruments used were the modified Symptom Distress Scale, disease catastrophizing scale (modified from Coping Strategies Questionnaire), and Herth's Hope Index. Adult NPC patients (N = 115; 33 undergoing RT, 44 who completed RT within 1 year, and 38 who completed RT more than 1 year but less than 3 years) were recruited from an outpatient RT center in Northern Taiwan. Although participants' overall symptom distress was mild to moderate, they scored moderate level for several distressful symptoms: drymouth, fatigue, hearing difficulty, loss of appetite, insomnia, and pain. Patients undergoing RT had greater symptom distress than subjects in the other 2 groups. Regression analysis revealed that catastrophizing was the only predictor of hope. Patients who engaged in catastrophizing reported much lower levels of hope. Particular care and attention are recommended to help NPC patients deal with the top distressful symptoms listed. Nursing interventions to reduce catastrophic thinking and enhance hope are discussed.