

Thesis Title Relationship Between Uncertainty in Illness and
Coping Behavior in Cancer Patients Receiving
Radiotherapy

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Abstract

The purpose of this research was to investigate the uncertainty in illness, coping behavior including the relationship between uncertainty in illness and coping behavior in cancer patients receiving radiotherapy. Subjects consisted of 70 cancer patients receiving radiotherapy at radio-oncology section, Maharaj Nakorn Chiang Mai hospital during February 1993 to May 1993. Subjects had cancer of head and neck, lung cancer, breast cancer, esophageal cancer, gynecological cancer and non - Hodgkin's lymphoma.

The instrument used for data collection was an interview form composed of three parts : patient's record form, Mishel uncertainty in illness scale developed by Mishel and adapted by Tipaporn Wonghongkul and Montha Lymthongkul and readapted to the interview form by the researcher and coping behavior interview form adapted from Jalowiec coping behavior scale by the researcher. The content validity was assessed by experts. The reliability was obtained by Cronbach's coefficient alpha. The reliability of the uncertainty in illness interview form was 0.74 and the coping behavior interview form was 0.79.

The results of the study revealed that:

1. The score of uncertainty in illness was high level on the 1st day before radiotherapy , and reduced to medium level on the 15th day and 30th day after radiotherapy .

2. Subjects had high level of the problem - focused coping behavior on the 1st day before radiotherapy , 15th day and 30th day after radiotherapy and the problem-focused coping behavior score tended to increase on the 30th day after radiotherapy. The subjects had medium level of emotion - focused coping behavior on the 1st day before, 15th day and 30th day after radiotherapy and the emotion - focused coping score tended to decrease on the 15th day and 30th day after radiotherapy.

3. There was a statistically significant negative relationship between the uncertainty in illness and the problem - focused coping behavior and positive relationship between the uncertainty in illness and the emotion - focused coping behavior at the level of .001 .01 and .001 on the 1st day before , 15th day and 30th day after radiotherapy.