

FACTORS RELATED TO QUALITY OF LIFE AMONG PATIENTS WITH BRAIN TUMORS

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Numbers of patients with brain tumors in Vietnam have been increasing in the past decade. New treatment modalities of these patients have been improved leading to huge numbers of patients receiving health services in tertiary care hospital. However, patients still got access to health care service in the late stage leading to poor Quality of Life (QOL). This descriptive correlational research aimed to study the relationship among body mass index (BMI), symptom distress, anxiety and QOL among patients with brain tumors during hospital stay. Health related quality of life theory was used as a framework for this study. Data collection was conducted using FACT – Br scale measure QOL and other standard scale to measure other variables. Spearman's Rho was employed to test the relationship among all studied variables. The sample included 115 adult patients with brain tumors during their hospital stay. The results revealed that the majority of the patients were male (60.9%), ages ranged from 41 to 60 years with the average age of 51.88 years ($SD \pm 13.5$ years). The majority of the patients (95.6%) paid their medical expenses by governmental insurance, about a half of them (50.4%) had metastatic brain tumors and the average scores of the QOL was 129.47 ($SD \pm 18.85$) which referred to relatively poor QOL. Anxiety and symptom distress were negatively correlated with QOL ($r = -.702, p < 0.01$; $r = -.665, p < 0.01$) while BMI was not correlated with the QOL. From this study, it was recommended that nurses who take care of patients with brain tumor should pay more attention to the patients' QOL by conducting routine assessment and early identify the ones with poor QOL. Strategies to improve QOL have to be taken into serious consideration. Symptom management protocol has to be developed and implemented. Patients' anxiety has to be carefully assessed and properly managed. Further study showed be conducted on a larger sample and in multi sites to reveal the broader picture of QOL among patients with brain tumor.

KEY WORDS: QUALITY OF LIFE / BRAIN TUMORS/ BMI/ ANXIETY/ SYMPTOMS

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