



Mental health care for cancer patients

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1 INTRODUCTION

Cancer is one of the leading causes of morbidity and mortality worldwide, with millions of new cases and deaths recorded annually. In addition to the physical and medical challenges that the diagnosis and treatment of the disease bring, there is also a significant impact on the mental health of patients and their families. Cancer patients face an increased risk of developing psychiatric disorders such as depression and anxiety, and these disorders can negatively affect quality of life, emotional well-being, and the patient's ability to cope with treatment.

The mental health of the cancer patient is a crucial and often neglected aspect of clinical practice. Mental health care should be integrated into the therapeutic approach, aiming to minimize the negative effects of cancer and treatment on the patient's mental health. Early identification and appropriate treatment of psychiatric disorders can improve the patient's quality of life and prognosis. In addition, emotional and psychological support throughout the cancer treatment process is critical to reduce patient stress, anxiety, and depression, as well as to help patients cope with the challenges associated with the diagnosis and treatment.

Thus, this systematic literature review will identify the best practices and interventions available for prevention and treatment of psychiatric disorders in cancer patients. Bringing new perspectives to clinical practice regarding the integrated approach to mental health in oncology treatment and thus contribute to improving the quality of life of patients and their families.

2 GOAL

The objective of this systematic literature review is to investigate and evaluate the best practices and interventions available for the prevention and treatment of psychiatric disorders in cancer patients. In addition, it seeks to identify new perspectives and integrative approaches that may contribute to improving the mental health of these patients and their families.



Considering that the mental health of cancer patients has been a neglected aspect in clinical practice, it is essential to identify new approaches for prevention, diagnosis and treatment of psychiatric disorders in this population. With medical advances, new perspectives have emerged, especially in the field of psychology and psychiatry, including cognitive-behavioral therapy, acceptance and commitment therapy, and other techniques that can help promote resilience and emotional well-being.

Thus, we will provide an overview of existing best practices, as well as identify new perspectives and integrative approaches for mental health care in cancer patients, aiming to improve the quality of life and emotional well-being of this very vulnerable population

2 METHODOLOGY

Five descriptors were used to search for articles published in the last 10 years in the Pubmed, Scielo, VHL, Google Scholar and Latindex databases: "cancer", "oncology", "mental health", "psychiatric disorders" and "palliative care". The inclusion criteria were studies that addressed interventions for prevention and/or treatment of psychiatric disorders in oncology patients. Studies that did not directly address the patient's mental health, narrative reviews, case reports, and studies with samples smaller than 20 patients were excluded.

3 DEVELOPMENT

This systematic literature review identified a variety of approaches for the prevention and treatment of psychiatric disorders in cancer patients. Most of the studies reviewed emphasized the importance of early diagnosis and appropriate treatment of psychiatric disorders, including depression, anxiety, and post-traumatic stress. Several approaches for the prevention and treatment of psychiatric disorders in cancer patients were identified, including psychosocial, pharmacological, and exercise interventions.

Regarding psychosocial interventions, cognitive-behavioral therapy (CBT) and acceptance and commitment therapy (ACT) have been the most studied approaches and have shown positive results in reducing symptoms of anxiety and depression. CBT is a brief, present-oriented therapy that emphasizes the identification and modification of dysfunctional thought and behavior patterns, while ACT is a therapy that emphasizes the acceptance of difficult thoughts and emotions and the adoption of personal values.

As for pharmacological interventions, fluoxetine and sertraline were the most studied medications and showed positive results in reducing anxiety and depression symptoms in cancer patients. However, it is important to remember that the choice of medication should be individualized and evaluated by a medical specialist.



Regarding exercise, physical activity has shown to be a promising intervention to improve the mental health of cancer patients. Studies indicate that regular physical activity can reduce symptoms of anxiety and depression, and improve quality of life. Yoga and meditation exercises have also been associated with reduced symptoms of anxiety and depression in cancer patients.

Another emerging perspective is the importance of mindfulness in the mental health treatment of cancer patients. Studies suggest that mindfulness practice can reduce symptoms of anxiety and depression and improve quality of life in cancer patients.

In summary, this systematic review highlights the importance of psychosocial, pharmacological, and exercise interventions in improving the mental health of cancer patients, with specific approaches, such as CBT, ACT, fluoxetine, sertraline, regular physical activity, yoga, meditation, and mindfulness, that have proven effective in reducing symptoms of anxiety and depression. It is important to remember that the choice of intervention should be individualized and evaluated by a medical specialist, taking into consideration the specific needs and characteristics of each patient.

4 CONCLUDING REMARKS

Mental health is an important issue for cancer patients, as diagnosis and treatment can be stressful and emotionally challenging. The importance of psychosocial, pharmacological, and exercise interventions in improving the mental health of cancer patients is highlighted.

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Given this, the importance of multidisciplinary interventions in the mental health care of cancer patients is evident. It is important that health professionals consider complementary therapeutic approaches that include psychosocial, pharmacological, and exercise interventions to treat cancer-associated psychiatric disorders. In addition, the choice of intervention should be individualized and evaluated by a medical specialist, taking into consideration the specific needs and characteristics of each patient. In this way, improving mental health can have a significant impact on the quality of life of cancer patients, as well as on the treatment and prognosis of the disease.



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