

The Uncertainty and Nursing Needs of Cancer Patients by Stage of Participation in Anticancer Clinical Trials.

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INTRODUCTION

Cancer is the leading cause of death in Korea. Anticancer drug clinical trials are an integral part of the Korean government's comprehensive plan for cancer management, and last year's anticancer drug clinical trial ranked first among all clinical trials. Cancer patients may experience negative emotions and have difficulty responding to the disease when facing uncertainty, which can exacerbate their pain. Research nurses, as patient advocates and researchers, require a comprehensive understanding of cancer patients' clinical trial experiences.

OBJECTIVE

This study aims to comprehensively review literature to understand cancer patients' overall experience in clinical trials and identify their uncertainty and nursing needs.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

This literature review was conducted in early 2023, using the PubMed, Embase, CINAHL, and RISS databases. The search terms were limited to "cancer," "patient," "uncertainty," and "nursing need*". No restrictions were placed on the search period or language, and the retrieved articles included journal articles and gray literature of various types. A total of 33 articles were found, and 11 of them were analyzed in this literature review.

RESULTS

Cancer patients participating in clinical trials may experience conflicts, such as fear of side effects, worry about dropping out, conflicts as subjects, physical discomfort, limitations of combination therapy, and lingering feelings about other anticancer treatments. Among the uncertainty factors, unpredictability can increase uncertainty, making it difficult for patients to effectively cope with and adapt to the disease process in unpredictable situations like clinical trials.

Previous studies about nursing needs have shown that the nursing needs of cancer patients differ based on their treatment process and disease stage. Additionally, there may be a difference between the nursing needs that patients expect and what nurses believe to be necessary. To provide patient-centered nursing care, it is essential to tailor nursing interventions to the specific needs of cancer patients based on their situation.

CONCLUSIONS

In conclusion to comprehensively understand the experiences of cancer patients in the unique environment of clinical trials and to provide corresponding nursing interventions, it is necessary to understand uncertainty and nursing needs at each stage of participation in anticancer clinical trials.

