Topic: Preliminary discussion on the effects of emotional screening in breast cancer patients

Significance & Background

According to literatures over 50% of cancer patients suffer from different levels of emotional distress, which could affect the cancer's course of disease, the patient's quality of life, compliance to the physician's advice, and even prognosis. This study uses scale ratings such as Distress Thermometer (DT) and Brief Symptom Rating Scale-5 (BSRS-5) to screen for cases with moderate or above levels of emotional distress to carry out referral assessment.

Purpose Interventions

With the sum of DT and BSRS-5 scores of over 15 points or a suicidal ideation of over two points as the segmentation point, a total of 30 newly diagnosed breast cancer patients were assessed to be at a moderate or above level of emotional distress. These patients will begin psychiatric treatment and intervention care and will be assessed with a post-test after three months.

Evaluation

With these cases, in addition to receiving counseling and drug therapy, nurse navigators will also refer to spiritual care providers and cancer support groups to provide pastoral care and opportunities for patients to share and cheer for each other. In effect, the average sum of BSRS and DT dropped from 19.6 points to 7.5 points.

Discussion

After intervention of the emotional screening scale, the emotional distress levels in patients did lower. This study is only directed at breast cancer cases, and should be expanded to other cancer groups in the future.

Innovation

In the future, the emotional screening scale can be used to assess hospitalized or outpatient cancer patients and the referral mechanism can be utilized to activate multidisciplinary team work to increase the patients' ability to adjust to the disease and treatment compliance, allowing for a successfully companioned fight against cancer.