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• Preventing CIA in Women with Breast Cancer Improves Psychological Well-being

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Abstract

In adult women with breast cancer, alopecia that often accompanies the use of chemotherapy can be devastating when added to the emotional distress of receiving treatment. According to the Up to Date database, cryotherapy is successful at reducing or preventing alopecia during breast cancer chemotherapy treatment. In addition, several recent studies have shown that chemotherapy-induced alopecia has a negative effect on the body image and psychological well-being of women with breast cancer. The review of literature from Cochrane and PubMed database, from the last ten years, explored studies of women ages 18-80 with breast cancer that evaluated the impact of chemotherapy-induced alopecia on patient’s self-confidence, body image, and well-being including anxiety and depression. Shin, Jo, Kim, Kwon, & Myung (2014) reported that scalp cooling method significantly reduced the development of CIA in comparison to other methods and reduced relative risk by one-third. (p<0.001). Choi et al., (2014) found CIA distress was negatively associated with body image, psychosocial well-being and depression among breast cancer patients. Significant differences were found between the severity of alopecia and distress (p<0.001). In summary, this review of studies found:

- Hair loss is consistently ranked among the most troublesome side effects of chemotherapy (Van den Hurk et al., 2012).
- Additional research found that many women felt losing their hair was more devastating than losing a breast, and that 8% of women in the study would refuse treatment due to the risk of alopecia (Yagener & Olsen, 2011).

Research Question

In women diagnosed with breast cancer that receive chemotherapy, does the use of cryotherapy in the prevention of alopecia provide the participants with increased positive psychological outcomes?

Literature Review

The search of literature provided the following main points:

- Chon, Champion, Geddes, & Rashid (2012) stated that across adult women with breast cancer and effect their overall psychosocial well-being, and depression in breast cancer patients. Significant differences were found between the severity of alopecia and distress (p<0.001). In summary, this review of studies found:

Discussion

Applicability to Clinical Practice

- This study should increase primary care providers awareness of the detrimental effects of CIA on their patients’ lives.
- The recent approval of cold cap therapy by the FDA will give patients more access to this treatment, allow for payment by insurance carriers and will become a standard of treatment for women with breast cancer in the prevention CIA.
- CIA prevention using cryotherapy will minimize a devastating side-effect for patients and allow them to maintain their self-esteem, self-confidence and overall well-being.
- A multidisciplinary approach to the management and care of breast cancer patients would make a physically, mentally, and emotionally devastating consequence of treatment into an opportunity for positive self-esteem.

References


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