The Effect of a Coping Enhancing Program on Depression in Breast Cancer Patients

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Abstract

Purpose: The study was aimed at investigating the effect of a coping enhancing program on depression in breast cancer patients.

Design: Randomized controlled trial.

Methods: The study sample consisted of patients being informed of their diagnosis of breast cancer. They were treated for the first or second time with postoperative chemotherapy at a chemotherapy center in a tertiary hospital. The total number of subjects was 56 and randomly assigned to an experimental and a control groups with 28 each. The experimental group received the coping enhancing program for breast cancer patients. The program was composed of two individual counseling sessions conducted at the hospital, and four telephone visits. The control group received routine nursing care from the hospital. The subjects’ depression was assessed using the Center for Epidemiologic Studies-Depression Scale: CES-D, both before and after the experiment. Data were analyzed using descriptive statistics, chi-square test, and t-test, with the significance level at .05.

Main findings: The study result revealed that the post-test depression mean score of the experimental group (x = 6.607, SD = 2.819) was lower than that of the control group (x = 17.714, SD = 7.605) with statistical significance (p < .001).

Conclusion and recommendations: The coping enhancing program was effective for reducing depression in breast cancer patients post operation. This program should be encouraged to implement in this group of patients. Nurses who provide this program should also be trained for problem solving counseling.

Keywords: breast cancer, coping behavior, depression