Nursing interventions in prevention of the complication in locoregional administration of chemotherapy through port-a-cath system

KEYWORDS: Nurse's Role; Drug therapy; Catheters, Indwelling; Colorectal Neoplasms; Oncologic Nursing

**Background:** Port-a-cath is an implantable system, which can be inserted into the arterial or venous blood vessel. It enables more comfortable administration of drugs. Intraarterial chemotherapy has the greatest effect in the region downstream of the place of insertion, without major systemic side effects. The aim of the study was to evaluate complications during the administration of cytotoxic drugs through port-a-cath system.

**Patients and methods:** Twenty colorectal cancer patients with liver metastases were entered into this investigation, and they were prospectively followed up. All of them had the intraarterial implantable device for intrahepatic drug delivery, and they were treated during six-month period. Nursing interventions serving to prevent complications of drug administration are as follows: preparing of the patient, check for the system, preparing cytotoxic drugs for the administration, control the patients and the drug flow during the administration of chemotherapy.

**Results:** During this prospective follow-up of our patients we noticed several problems related to the administration of chemotherapy through intraarterial port-a-cath systems. These difficulties include: difficulties in drug flow at the insertion point, difficulties in blood aspiration (n=6), redness above the puncture, painful and moist skin lesions around the puncture (n=1).

**Conclusion:** We did not notice frequent adverse effects of intrahepatic therapy because nursing interventions had been carefully planned in order to prevent the complications. Nurses should make an adequate health care plan based on the real and potential problems, with possible reasons and potential resolution of complications.

Our experience in education for patients and family members within European educational program "Learning to live with cancer"

KEYWORDS: Patient Education; Medical Oncology; Health Education

**Background:** We attended a workshop in April 1997 in Dublin where European Educative Program (EEP) for patients' education was presented. Since that time 12 seminars on patients' education have been organized at the Institute for Oncology and Radiology of Serbia (IORS). The aim of this investigation is to present the experience in education of patients and their family members within the EEP.

**Methodology:** From November 18, 1998 until January 29, 2003 twelve seminars had been taken place at IORS, and 391 trainees attended this workshop. Each trainee chose presented topics and mode of presentation individually for each session. Final evaluation was done at the end of each seminar. Apart from the seminar's evaluation in written form, the participants also had an opportunity to verbally pointed out advantages and disadvantages of the workshop.

**Results:** Among all participants, the majority of patients were women with breast cancer (70%) and colorectal patients (15%). The program and the workshop were evaluated as excellent by 51% of the participants, and as very good by 43% ones. Ninety one percent of trainees claimed that information was easy for understanding. Teaching and friendly relation caused positive emotions in more than 69% of the participants.

**Conclusion:** Our results confirms the importance, need and usefulness of educational activities at IORS within the EEP "Learning to live with cancer."