Abstract

Objectives: The objectives of this study were to assess the quality of life (QoL), nutritional status, and quantitative food intakes of non-terminal admitted cancer patients receiving oral feeding. As well as to evaluate what kind of relation exists between the quality of life, and the nutritional status and current intake. Scope: Medical Oncology and Radiotherapy Service ward at the Hospital Clínic de Barcelona. Subjects: Fifty admitted patients in the Service ward. Interventions: There was a follow-up of the dietary intake during 3 working days through direct observation, as well as an assessment of anthropometrical and biochemical parameters, a record of symptomatology related data, and a QoL assessment through the EORTC QLQ-C30 questionnaire.

Results: Our data show that 32.6% of the patients did not reach 25 kcal/kg/day, and 23.3% did not even fulfill 1 g protein/kg/day. Concerning QoL, mean score for global health status and overall QoL for all patients was 46.2. Compared to the general population, there were important deficits among cancer patients regarding physical, role and social functioning. The most pronounced differences in the symptom scales were for fatigue, and in single items for appetite loss and constipation. A low protein intake was associated to a poorer perception on physical functioning (p=0.01), and fatigue was close to significance (p=0.058). No significant differences were found regarding caloric intake and QoL. Conclusions: A significant percentage of patients who received exclusive oral feeding did not cover a minimum acceptable quantity of their protein-energy requirements. Our results point out that poor food intakes can affect QoL by themselves.

Keywords

Quality of life, Nutritional status, Food intakes, Cancer.