Abstract

This is a cross-sectional survey conducted from August to December 2010, which aimed to identify the presence and severity of fatigue in 140 elderly (mean age 69.8 years, 52.1% female) diagnosed with cancer undergoing chemotherapy in an outpatient unit. It was used a questionnaire for sociodemographic and clinical data and Piper Fatigue Scale-revised. The presence of fatigue was identified in 60 elderly (42.9%) and the attributed cause was cancer (64.1%), chemotherapy (32.8%) and treatment (3.1%). As relief factors, the elderly respondents reported “sleeping”, “pray” and “dying”, while 45% of them said “there was nothing to do” because fatigue could not be relieved. We hope that this study will alert the nurses to the relevance of fatigue and encourage them to identify and carry out nursing interventions aimed at proper management of this symptom in elderly cancer patient.

Keywords

Fatigue; Cancer; Elderly; Nursing.