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Nutrition sensitive intervention combined with counseling to enhance quality of life among Indian female palliative cancer patients

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Worldwide prevalence of malnutrition, amongst cancer palliative patients is 81%. As cancer progresses, patients' develop malnutrition owing to disease and chemoradiotherapy. Aim of this study was to improve nutritional status of female palliative cancer patients and their quality of life by counseling and providing nutrient rich natural food (IAtta). Female cancer patients (n=47) attending palliative care clinic (AIIMS, New Delhi); with symptoms of cachexia were randomly distributed into control group (CG, n=24) and intervention group (IG, n=23). IG received 100 grams of IAtta and CG received wheat flour to be consumed as breads daily along with nutritional counseling for three months. Anthropometric measurements [weight, percentage body fat (%BF) and mid upper arm circumference (MUAC)] and quality of life (EORTC-C30 Questionnaire) were assessed at baseline and after three months. Data was analyzed using paired t-test and Wilcoxon signed rank test on variables assessed. P value<0.05 was considered statistically significant at 95% confidence interval. Of 47 patients, 17 in IG and 22 in CG completed the study. Patients in both groups maintained their body weights (IG, p=0.284; CG, p=0.401) by end of the study. %BF (p=0.041) decreased significantly in the CG and were maintained in IG (p=0.289). Furthermore, under quality of life domains, at end of study period; IG disclosed significant improvement in fatigue (p=0.012) and appetite (p=0.004), while CG reported significant decrease in physical functioning (p=0.014). Nutrition sensitive intervention (IAtta) along with counseling may improve quality of life and stabilize body fat in female cancer cachexia patients receiving chemoradiotherapy.

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