

ORIGINAL ARTICLE

Emotional and Behavioral Disorders in Pediatric Cancer Patients

How to Cite This Article: Zahed GH^{id}, Koochi F^{id}. Emotional and behavioral disorders in pediatric cancer patients, Iran J Child Neurol. Winter 2020; 14(1): 113-121

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Received: 26-Sep-2018

Last Revised: 27-Oct-2018

Accepted: 01- May -2019

Abstract

Objectives

Childhood malignancies raise a range of medical, psychological and social concerns. Identifying psychiatric disorders along with providing mental health services to prevent the emergence and aggravation of mental health problems in children seems necessary in pediatric hospitals. We aimed to find out the frequency of probable emotional and behavioral disorders among children and adolescents with malignancy.

Materials & Methods

This was a cross-sectional study conducted at the Hematology-Oncology Ward of Mofid Hospital, Tehran, Iran, during 2017-2018. Emotional and behavioral disorders were assessed in 399 pediatric cancer patients aged 5 to 12 years using the Parent Checklist of CSI-4.

Results

Overall, 89.2% of the samples met the diagnostic criteria for at least one disorder. The most prevalent psychiatric disorders were specific phobia (57%), enuresis (41.9%), obsessive-compulsive disorder (45.6%) and separation anxiety disorder (30.3%). Our results did not show any significant relationship between gender or disease type and the prevalence of psychiatric disorders.

Conclusion

The prevalence of emotional and behavioral disorders in pediatric cancer patients admitted to children's hospitals is common. These disorders affect the treatment and quality of life of these patients. Therefore, our findings may guide parents, nurses and clinicians to become more cognizant of the identification and management of these disorders.

Keywords: Psychiatric disorders, Pediatric patients, Malignancies, Emotional and behavioral disorders