Ambulating Oncology Patients: Nurses Perspective.

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Identified an opportunity to increase nursing knowledge of the impact mobility has on the health of the oncology patient, which was noticed during bedside shift report.

Conversations with oncology providers and nurses about the lack of exercise patients are experiencing while hospitalized.

**PICO Question** – Will an educational module increase the oncology nurse’s knowledge related to the benefits of exercise in the patient population?

**P-** Oncology Nurses on 7C and 5T

**I-** Education on the importance of physical activity in the oncology population.

**C-** No education

**O-** Increase nurses knowledge related to the benefits of physical activity.

**Evidence**

- Increase in primary and secondary endpoints after 3 hours and thirty minutes of aerobic exercise a week after induction chemotherapy
- Primary endpoints – functional capacity/exercise capacity (6 minute walk distance)
- Secondary endpoints – VO2 max test, sit to stand test, bicep curl test, physical activity levels, patient reported outcomes (quality of life, anxiety, depression, symptom prevalence, intensity and interference) (Jarden et al., 2013)
- Increase in body weight after two 50 minute sessions a week consisting of a warm up, circuit training, and stretching/relaxation (Oldervall et al., 2011).
- All parameters of immune function (cytokines, mediating proteins, cell counts and functions) improve with acute and/or chronic exercise (Jarsma et al., 2013)
- Resilience is negatively associated with psychological distress, and that resilience is associated with higher activity levels and functional capacity (Matzka et al., 2016).
- An average person’s walking speed equals 0.6 miles in 10 minutes (Evans, n.d.).

**Implementation/Methods**

- Inclusion criteria: Nurses on 7C and 5T.
- Education was provided through a self-study guide.
- A total of 44 RNs were notified about the education through email and during staff meetings.
- The education was tailored to the individual unit, specifically related to the number of laps a patient would need to ambulate to reach the daily recommended amount of exercise, which is 20-30 minutes per day or approximately 1.2 - 1.8 miles per day.
- Pre- and post-education data was collected through surveys regarding nurses knowledge and perspective on ambulating oncology patients.

**Outcome**

- 8 RNs total participated in the surveys and education.
- Based on the first graph, knowledge about the importance of ambulation in the oncology population increased after the education was provided.
- The second graph portrays that nurses perceive their patient’s daily exercise as inadequate after they received the education.
- The third graph shows the knowledge deficit that was present before intervention; with the education significantly improving the nurses’ knowledge on exactly the amount of laps a patient should be walking on each perspective unit.

**Conclusion**

- According to the data that was collected pre- and post-education, there is an increase in awareness of importance and knowledge of the benefits related to oncology patients getting exercise in an inpatient setting.
- Limitations to this study include a small sample size, time restrictions, and not assessing the actual patients and their exercising habits and knowledge.
- Moving forward, a patient centered study would be beneficial to obtain data on how getting the daily recommended amount of exercise affects the patients directly.