Symptom Clusters in Patients With Pancreatic Cancer Undergoing Surgical Resection: Part II

Sherry A. Burrell, PhD, RN, CNE, Theresa P. Yeo, PhD, MPH, AOCNP-BC®, Suzanne C. Smeltzer, EdD, RN, ANEF, FAAN, Benjamin E. Leiby, PhD, BA, Harish Lavu, MD, Eugene P. Kennedy, MD, and Charles J. Yeo, MD

OBJECTIVES: To explore the relationship between 16 symptom clusters (SCs), clinical and demographic influencing factors, and clinical outcomes over time in patients with pancreatic cancer (PC) undergoing surgical resection.

SAMPLE & SETTING: 143 patients with stage II PC undergoing surgical resection were recruited to participate in this longitudinal, exploratory study conducted at Thomas Jefferson University Hospital, a National Cancer Institute–designated cancer center.

METHODS & VARIABLES: Quality of life was measured preoperatively and at three, six, and nine months postoperatively. Statistical methods included simple linear and Cox proportional hazard regression.

RESULTS: Preoperative pain was significantly associated with the pain–gastrointestinal SC, and preoperative worry was significantly associated with the mood SC. The strongest negative association with emotional well-being across all study time points was found with the preoperative mood SC. The insomnia–digestive problems SC and the nutritional problems SC demonstrated a trend toward poor survival.

IMPLICATIONS FOR NURSING: Findings provide evidence that preoperative worry and pain are associated with SC severity and that SCs may have a detrimental effect on quality of life and survival in patients with PC undergoing surgical resection.

KEYWORDS pancreatic cancer; symptom clusters; quality of life; survival; surgery

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