Breast cancer is the most prevalent cancer type in women worldwide and in China, with a report showing that there were 416,371 new female breast cancer cases in 2020 (Globocan, 2021). Cancer itself and its curative treatment modalities cause various side effects during the disease trajectory. As the most commonly used adjuvant systemic treatment, chemotherapy usually induces a series of unpleasant physical and psychological symptoms (e.g., gastrointestinal symptoms, fatigue, sleep disturbance, depressed mood) that seldom occur in isolation (Chui, 2019). One study suggested that chemotherapy-related symptoms were often more distressing than symptoms caused by other treatments (Sibeoni et al., 2018). Of note, an average of about 17 symptoms were reported by patients with breast cancer who received chemotherapy (Begum et al., 2016).

**Background**

When two or more concurrent symptoms share some interrelationships, they are considered to have formed a symptom cluster (Kim et al., 2005). Previous studies have used various symptom inventories, such as the MD Anderson Symptom Inventory and Symptom Experience Scale, and analytical techniques (e.g., factor analysis, latent analysis) to identify symptom clusters in patients who received chemotherapy for breast cancer (Albusoul et al., 2017; Hsu et al., 2017). This de novo approach, which identifies symptom clusters from all possible symptoms (Miaskowski, 2016), is known for its ability to consider a comprehensive range of symptoms. Although inconsistent findings were drawn from these studies, the three following common symptoms were found to frequently...