

The Effects of Discharge Planning on Quality of Life in Breast Cancer Patients

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Abstract

Introduction: Breast cancer is the most common malignancy in women. Surgery is the first line of treatment. Side effects of Surgery and disease can influence quality of life (QOL) domains. The purpose of this study was to investigate the effect of discharge planning on QOL in patients with breast cancer.

Materials and Methods: This study was a randomized clinical trial on 69 women with breast cancer, eligible patients were assigned to intervention and control groups. In intervention group, discharge planning consisted of preoperative teaching, postoperative follow up, two client visits and 6 phone calls during the 6 weeks immediately following discharge. In the control group hospital's routine program implemented. The instruments used in this study were demographic and quality of life questionnaire which was combination of SF36 and breast cancer quality of life questionnaire (QOL-BC) and discharge planning check list, completed at recruitment and 6 weeks after surgery for patients. Finally the obtained data were analyzed using SPSS software and statistical tests.

Results: Based on the results obtained there were no significant differences between two groups in average score in physical ($P = 0.25$), mental ($P = 0.40$), social ($P = 0.21$), spiritual ($P = 0.66$) domains and quality of life ($P = 0.83$) before intervention. While after intervention no improvement was observed in control group, statistically significant improvement was in QOL ($P < 0.001$) and physical ($P < 0.001$), emotional ($P < 0.001$), social ($P < 0.001$), spiritual domains ($P < 0.001$) in intervention group.

Conclusions: Discharge planning as an effective follow up program could be an effective approach for improving QOL in patients with breast cancer undergoing surgery.