Abstract

Background   Non-Hodgkin lymphoma (NHL) is one of the ten commonest cancers in Hong Kong. Prior studies have shown a high prevalence of psychiatric morbidities especially depression and anxiety in NHL survivors in the West. The psychiatric morbidities should be identified and treated earlier, as they have significant negative impact on survivors' quality of life and prognosis. However, little is known about the prevalence and associated risk factors for psychiatric disorders among NHL survivors in Hong Kong.

Objectives To evaluate the prevalence and identify the associated factors of psychiatric disorders, and to evaluate the effectiveness of the Hospital Anxiety and Depression Scale (HADS) in screening for current psychiatric disorders in Chinese NHL survivors

Methods This cross-sectional study recruited all NHL patients who had completed treatment in a hematology or oncology clinic at a regional hospital in Hong Kong from August 2012 to March 2013. All participants completed the self-rating questionnaires including the Chinese version of the Hospital Anxiety and Depression Scale (HADS) and the 36-item Short Form Health Survey (SF-36). The Chinese-bilingual Structured Clinical Interview for DSM-IV Axis I Disorders, Patient research version (CB-SCID-I/P) was then administered to establish the psychiatric diagnoses. Information regarding patient-related and cancer-related factors was also collected.

Results Of the 168 subjects (100 males and 68 females), 23.2% had current psychiatric disorders. The point prevalence of depressive disorders and anxiety disorders were 17.9% and 8.9% respectively. The lifetime prevalence of psychiatric disorders was 26.8%. The lifetime prevalence of depressive disorders, anxiety disorders, and schizophrenia were 20.2%, 10.1% and 0.6% respectively. Major depressive disorder was the most common depressive disorder and generalized anxiety disorder was the most common anxiety disorder. Logistic regression revealed pain, subjective poor memory, past psychiatric history before diagnosis of NHL and financial difficulties were associated with current psychiatric disorders and depressive disorders; activities of daily living requiring assistance were associated with current psychiatric disorders; fatigue was associated to depressive disorders; subjective poor memory and history of recurrence were associated with anxiety disorders. The HADS was effective in screening for current psychiatric disorders, with a cut-off score of 7/8 corresponding to 92.3% sensitivity and 93.0% specificity.

Conclusion Psychiatric disorders, predominantly depressive and anxiety disorders, are common in Chinese NHL survivors. Identification of the predictive factors would allow early interventions to those who are susceptible to psychiatric morbidities. HADS is an effective instrument for screening current psychiatric disorders in these patients.