Prevalence and factors associated with malnutrition in older patients with cancer

Abstract

BACKGROUND:
>60% of patients with cancer are 65 years of age and older, and malnutrition is commonly encountered in older adults.

OBJECTIVE:
To assess the prevalence and factors associated with malnutrition in older patients with cancer.

METHODS:
In this cross-sectional study, patients with cancer underwent a comprehensive geriatric assessment (CGA). Malnutrition status was diagnosed by clinical assessment including screening tools such as Mini Nutrition Assessment (MNA), weight loss, and BMI.

ANALYSIS:
Descriptive statistics, chi-Square and logistic regression analysis were used to assess factors associated with malnutrition.

RESULTS:
A total of 454 patients with malnutrition information available were included in analysis. The median age was 78, range 65-96 years and comorbid diagnoses included dementia, mild cognitive impairment, frailty, and functional impairment. A total of 41.9% (n = 190) were diagnosed with malnutrition during the CGA. In the multivariable analysis, major depression and frailty were significantly associated with malnutrition. After controlling for potential confounders, patients who had malnutrition were 2.53-times more likely to have major depression (OR = 2.53, 95% CI: 1.23-5.24, p = 0.01) and 3.82 times more likely to have frailty (OR = 3.82, 95% CI: 1.35-10.84, p = 0.01) than those without malnutrition.

CONCLUSIONS:
Despite significant advances in cancer and supportive care, malnutrition remains a significant and highly prevalent public health problem among older patients with cancer. Identifying factors associated with risk for malnutrition in this patient population can help develop preventive strategies as part of care. Prospective studies are recommended.

25/04/2019 - A cura di Massimo Vincenzi