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The effects of symptoms on quality of life during chemotherapy in African-American women with breast cancer

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Little is known about the effects of burdensome symptoms during chemotherapy treatment in African-American women. This study explored the symptom burden occurring during chemotherapy treatment and how these symptoms impacted functional well-being and quality of life (QOL). A sample of 30 African American women with breast cancer (BC) completed a battery of questionnaires that were used to collect the data at baseline, midpoint, and at the completion of chemotherapy. There were significant differences in the severity of symptoms for worse pain, pain interference with activities of daily living (ADLs), present fatigue and history of fatigue, present nausea and history of nausea and insomnia as well as lower intensity of QOL measures over the course of chemotherapy treatment. All symptoms had greater intensity at midpoint and completion than at baseline. Worst pain had a significant negative effect on functional well-being. Both pain and depression each had significant negative effects on QOL.

Biography:

Iye Kanu is a research nurse at Johns Hopkins University, School of Nursing and presently working on research projects aimed at reducing health disparities among minority women in oncology and perinatal settings.