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Progressive muscle relaxation on life-altering symptoms in persons with hepatocellular carcinoma undergoing transarterial chemoembolization therapy**Nuttamon Vuttanon, Chutima Meechamnan and Patchara Naktanom**
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In Thailand, Hepatocellular Carcinoma (HCC) ranks as the number one cancer in men and fourth in women. It is also the major cause of death in men and ranks second in women. Transarterial Chemoembolization (TACE) is the recommended treatment for HCC patients, resulting in delayed tumor progression and prolonged survival. However, TACE leads to several life-altering symptoms including pain, fever and nausea and/or vomiting. Current knowledge on integrative therapies demonstrates that some technique such as the progressive muscle relaxation might assist with pain management. The study used a one group pre and post-test design. Participants were 30 HCC patients who underwent first TACE attending a university hospital in Thailand. They received PMR training and provided a PMR CD for home practice. They were educated to use PMR as needed for symptom management for six weeks at home, kept a log of symptom rating book each time PMR was used, recorded the time of day and made immediate pre and post treatment recording the symptoms severity using a 0-10 scale. The two most life-altering symptoms after TACE were pain, which can be classified as lower back pain and upper back pain. The changes in symptom ratings from pre to post-PMR were significant. Mean lower back pain scores decreased from 4.71 (SD=0.82) pre-treatment to 3.80 (SD=0.60) post-treatment ($Z=-3.70$, $p<0.01$) and mean upper back pain scores decreased from 4.33 (SD=0.45) pre-treatment to 2.73 (SD=0.33) post-treatment ($Z=-3.92$, $p<0.01$). This study has shown the efficacy of progressive muscle relaxation techniques in decreasing pain on patients and suggests that PMR should be considered for all patients with HCC experiencing pain.

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