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THE IMPORTANCE OF NUTRITION IN CHILDREN WITH CANCER TREATMENT

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Background: It is important to provide adequate nutrition to increase the success of cancer treatment and to reduce the complications caused by cancer. Providing adequate and balanced nutrition improves treatment tolerance, reduces side effects, prevents weight loss and improves treatment response. For these reasons, it is very important for children to have healthy and balanced nutrition during cancer treatment.

Aim: Evaluation of the importance of nutrition in children with cancer treatment.

Method: Review of the studies conducted on this field.

Result: Children's cancer treatment is not able to recognize problems related to nutrition in the process, the problems related to nutrition can not be noticed, malnutrition is not recognized or taken seriously, disregarding the diet in the treatment process, the lack of information and experience from the nutritional support team are the mistakes and deficiencies of the child's nutrition. Also, side effects associated with treatments such as decreased nutrient intake, nausea, vomiting, constipation, diarrhea, impaired absorption, oral mucositis and taste changes cause eating disorders in children with cancer treatment.

Conclusion: Assessment of the nutrition of children treated with cancer should be done by a multidisciplinary team that includes doctors, nurses, dietitians and social services. Enteral or parenteral nutrition is used when oral intake is insufficient to provide nutrition for children with cancer. Antiemetic drugs can be used for treatment-related nausea and vomiting. Fibrous food and plenty of liquid are recommended in constipation cases. Children with mucositis need to have proper oral care as well as soft foods, and analgesic drugs should be used in pain. Guidelines for care to be applied to solve nutritional problems are needed. However, the evidence-based guidelines used in the clinical management of nutritional problems in children receiving chemotherapy are scarce and there is a need to develop national guidelines for the resolution of nutritional problems.

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