Variations in Self-Reported Nausea, Vomiting, and Well-Being During the First 10 Days Postchemotherapy in Women With Breast Cancer

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Women with breast cancer undergoing chemotherapy experience nausea and vomiting, both common symptoms affecting quality of life. The aim of the current study was to describe how nausea, vomiting, and well-being vary during the first 10 days after chemotherapy in women with breast cancer. A pilot study with a repeated-measurements design was conducted at a Swedish county hospital where 39 women with breast cancer treated with adjuvant chemotherapy were observed. A structured 10-day diary was used for data collection. Of the 39 women in the study, 33 experienced nausea and 6 also experienced vomiting after chemotherapy. Changes in well-being as a result of nausea or vomiting during any part of the day, as well as distress for other reasons, were reported. Well-being also varied among the individuals. The pattern of change in experienced levels of well-being was not homogeneous, nor did it move in any certain direction. The results of this study show that an individualized treatment approach is required to better meet individual women’s needs.

Key words: breast cancer; chemotherapy; nausea; vomiting; well-being

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