

Effects of Physical Therapy in Palliative Care for Cancer Patients

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Purpose: To understand what physical therapy can provide in palliative care of cancer patient and its effectiveness. **Method:** We searched randomized controlled trials and clinical trials from Pubmed, Cochrane library and Chinese Electronic Periodical Services by keywords including 1.cancer, 2.palliative care or end of life care or hospice, 3.physical therapy or physiotherapy or rehabilitation or therapeutic exercise or massage during 1998 and 2008. **Results:** Eighteen articles were selected into this review. The interventions related to physical therapy (PT) were: 1. massage (including 8 articles, recommendation grade: B), which improved physical symptoms, psychological symptoms, QOL, sleep disturbance, mood, using anti-depression drug; 2. exercise (including 5 articles, recommendation grade: B), which improved QOL, health status, psychological status, emotion, physical capacity, fitness; 3. physical therapy in multidisciplinary intervention (including 2 articles, recommendation grade: C), which improved QOL, physical symptoms and psychological symptoms; 4. combination of medical care and community health care (including 1 article), which did not improve QOL; 5. PT in rehabilitation services with teaching ROM exercise (including 1 article), which improved activity of daily living and pain; 6. rehabilitation in palliative care team (including 1 article), which improved the severity of the most bother symptom, QOL, mood, emotion. **Conclusion:** Receiving physical therapy can improve QOL, physical symptoms, psychological symptoms, and activity of daily living of cancer patients in palliative care. (FJPT 2009;34(2):125-135)

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