

Chemotherapy Induced Nausea & Vomiting – What Do Teenagers & Young Adults with Cancer (TYAC) Want?

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Introduction

Chemotherapy-induced nausea and vomiting (CINV) is a highly debilitating treatment consequence – successful symptom management is crucial to complete treatment.

Teenagers and Young Adults with Cancer (TYAC) are particularly susceptible to CINV due to high treatment intensity and complex, competing life demands. This project explores how these symptoms can be best managed in this unique age group.

“CINV is a complex set of symptoms (unlike nausea experienced before) that can impact lifestyle and personality”

Methods

Focused interviews were undertaken with 20 TYAC patients receiving chemotherapy at University College London Hospital. The mean age of participant was 16 years (range 13 to 20 years) with a mean treatment duration since diagnosis of 12.9 months (range 2 to 69 months). Thematic analysis of interviews was subsequently undertaken to create a draft guideline and information resource. Participants were offered the opportunity to feedback on the outcomes of the work

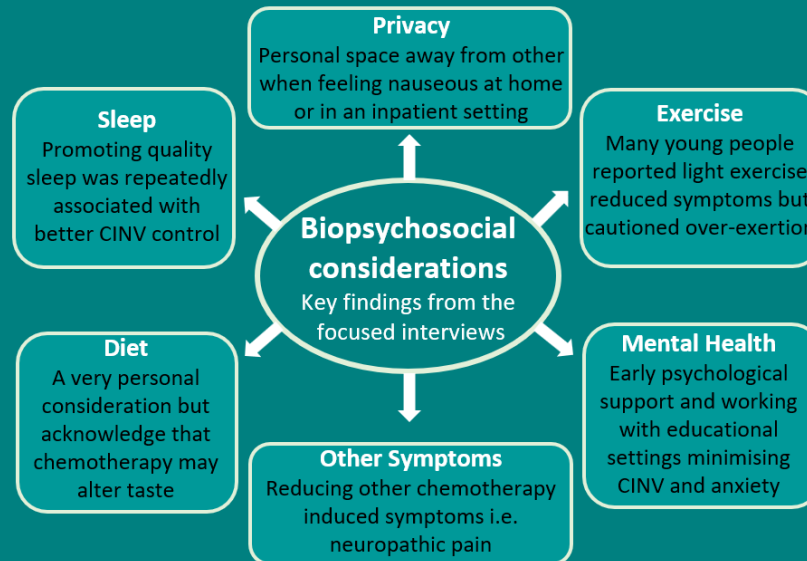
This project received funding from Teenagers & Young Adults with Cancer TYAC, part of the Children’s Cancer & Leukaemia Group CCLG.

“ I needed space for me, myself and I when I was feeling sick. I worried about disturbing others or them disturbing me”

What do young people want from healthcare professionals?

Many young people would like to know about different types of CINV and an early working relationship is critical to ensure young people are appropriately informed how challenging nausea and vomiting can be. It should be emphasised to all patients that symptom severity does not reflect treatment efficacy. Antiemetics should be reviewed regularly with an emphasis on pre-empting needs, anticipatory CINV antiemetics and avoiding polypharmacy.

“Is my chemo not working because I feel sick?”



Conclusions

TYAC value a holistic and personalised approach to CINV management, which addresses multiple biopsychosocial factors. Appropriate management of CINV in this population requires an approach with input from all members of the multi-disciplinary team. Key considerations to manage symptoms include:

- Personalised symptom management plans
- Exploring non-pharmacological and complementary therapies
- Giving young people agency to manage their own symptoms

Further work in the area may include resources for young people and exploring the impact of nausea and vomiting in the TYAC population undergoing radiotherapy.

The study investigators would like to thank all study participants for their time and contributions to this work.

“I knew this was going to be difficult but just not how badly”

Guideline & Resource for TYAC

Proposed resources for patients and professionals can be found via the QR codes below.



Patient Resource



Professional Resource



Feedback