

Effect of Humor on Pain and Anxiety in Patients with Rheumatoid Arthritis: A Prospective, Randomized Controlled Study

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Abstract : Introduction/objectives: We aimed to investigate the effect of humor on pain and state anxiety in patients with rheumatoid arthritis (RA) receiving biologic intravenous (IV) infusion therapy. Method: The study sample consisted of 36 patients who met the classification criteria for RA and inclusion criteria in a rheumatology outpatient clinic at a university hospital between September 2020 and November 2021. Two sample groups were formed: the intervention group (watching a comedy movie) (n=18) and the control group (n=18). The intervention group consisted of the patient watching a comedy movie of his/her choice from an archive created by the researchers during the biological IV infusion therapy (approximately 90-120 minutes). The data collection instruments used before and after the test were the descriptive identification form, the visual analog scale (VAS), and the state anxiety scale. Results: The mean VAS scores of patients in the intervention group were 5.05 ± 2.01 in the pre-test and 2.61 ± 1.91 in the post-test. The mean state anxiety scores of patients in the intervention group were 45.94 ± 9.97 in the pre-test and 34.22 ± 6.57 in the post-test. Thus, patients who watched comedy movies during biologic IV infusion therapy in the infusion center had a greater reduction in pain scores than the control group and the effect size was small. Although there was a decrease in state anxiety scores in both groups, there was no significant difference between groups and the effect size was not relevant. Conclusions: During IV infusion therapy, watching comedy movies is recommended as a nursing care intervention for reducing pain in patients with RA in cooperation with other health professionals.

Keywords : watching comedy movie, humor, pain, anxiety, nursing, care

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