A program of symptom management for improving self-care for patients with HIV/AIDS.

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Abstract

The purpose of this study was to investigate the effect of a symptom management program on self-care of medication side effects among AIDS/HIV-positive patients. Sixty-seven patients from a sexually transmitted disease control center, a medical center, and a Catholic AIDS support group in Taipei were randomly assigned to three groups: one-on-one teaching, group teaching, and a control group. All subjects in each teaching group attended a 60- or 90-minute program on highly active antiretroviral therapy (HAART) side effect self-care education and skill training once per week for 3 weeks; subjects also underwent counseling by telephone. A medication side effect self-care knowledge questionnaire, Rosenberg’s Self-Esteem Scale (RSES), and unscheduled hospital visits were used to evaluate the effectiveness of the symptom management program. The results revealed there were significant differences in mean difference of knowledge and unscheduled hospital visits between baseline and post-testing at 3 months for symptom management in the two groups. The mean difference of the self-esteem scale was not significant between the two groups. In summary, the symptom management program effectively increased the ability of AIDS/HIV-positive patients to self-care for medication side effects. We recommend that this program be applied in the clinical nursing practice.