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Hearing impairment and balance disorders in patients with anti-cancer chemotherapy

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Since 2000, the Department of Otolaryngology of the Military Institute of Health Services in cooperation with Department of Oncology of MIHS has been conducting research upon effects of anti cancer chemotherapy on hearing and balance organ.

The research included 70 patients (women and men between 35 and 70 years old) hospitalized in Department of Oncology of MIHS, who had prescribed chemotherapy courses with cisplatin,

The research utilized a survey developed in Department of Otolaryngology of MIHS, that comprised of questions on patients' subjective opinions about hearing and balance problems after chemotherapy. The specialist examinations consisted of tonal audiometry and videonystagmography performed after completion of treatment.

Audiology and labyrinth tests revealed post chemotherapy hearing and balance organ damage and lack of relationship between patients' symptoms, and specialist exams results.

Patients have complained of laryngological problems, occurring during anti cancer chemotherapy. During the treatment itself the patients experience and report the hearing problems to be the most annoying ones. In our research we have made attempts to find a relationship between patients' feelings and specialist exams results. None could be established. During the treatment itself laryngologic ailments seem to be less important for the patient than problems such as: nausea, vomiting, lassitude, psychophysical tiredness. Patients tend to associate balance disorders during treatment with weakness. Patients were very brief about their laryngologic problems in the survey. Only after chemotherapy end, during relative stabilization, did they pay attention to hearing problems. However, the examinations revealed not only hearing but also balance organ function impairment.

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