

Religiosity and its relations to quality of life in Christian Orthodox cancer patients undergoing chemotherapy

Assimakopoulos, K., Karaivazoglou, K., Ifanti, A.A., Gerolymos, M.K., Kalofonos, H.P., Iconomou, G.

*Psycho-Oncology*, 2008, vol. 18, pp. 284-289

## Abstract

*Objectives:* The first objective of the current observational study was to assess the levels of religiosity in Greek Christian Orthodox cancer patients receiving chemotherapy. The second objective was to evaluate the associations between religiosity and quality of life (QoL), an endpoint of considerable importance in clinical cancer research and practice.

*Method:* One hundred eighteen adult outpatients with solid tumors, who consented to participate, were administered the Systems of Belief Inventory (SBI-15R) and the European Organisation for Research and Treatment of Cancer (EORTC QLQ-C30) questionnaire.

*Results:* The analysis revealed high scores on religiosity, especially among female patients, who reported significantly higher levels of religious beliefs and practices as well as perceived social support provided by the religious community than did their male counterparts. Of all EORTC QOL-C30 subscales, only global QoL was found to be significantly associated with the SBI-15R religious beliefs subscale. The analysis revealed no significant correlations between the SBI-15R social support subscale and all QoL subscales.

*Conclusions:* The current study reported high levels of religiosity among Greek Christian Orthodox cancer patients. However, levels of religiosity were only weakly associated with patients' QoL. The SBI-15R appeared to be a well-accepted and reliable tool, potentially useful for future research in Greek settings. Wide-scale studies from the same and diverse religious and cultural backgrounds are needed to clarify further the connections between religiosity, QoL, coping, and other health outcomes with the aim to devise appropriate multicomponent

interventions to enhance patients' QoL. Copyright © 2008 John Wiley & Sons, Ltd.

Keywords:

cancer patients; religiosity; quality of life; Eastern Orthodox Church; oncology