

Review and Progress

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Research Progress on Psychological Nursing Strategies for Cancer Chemotherapy Patients Based on Humanistic Care

Tiantian Li, Jie Zhang ✉

Institute of Life Science, Jiyang College of Zhejiang A&F University, Zhuji, 311800, Zhejiang, China

✉ Corresponding email: jie.zhang@jicacat.orgInternational Journal of Clinical Case Reports 2026, Vol.16, No.1 doi: [10.5376/ijccr.2026.16.0006](https://doi.org/10.5376/ijccr.2026.16.0006)

Received: 10 Jan., 2026

Accepted: 14 Feb., 2026

Published: 27 Feb., 2026

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Preferred citation for this article:

Li T.T. and Zhang J., 2026, Research progress on psychological nursing strategies for cancer chemotherapy patients based on humanistic care, International Journal of Clinical Case Reports, 16(1): 53-65 (doi: [10.5376/ijccr.2026.16.0006](https://doi.org/10.5376/ijccr.2026.16.0006))

Abstract This study explores the research progress of psychological nursing strategies for cancer chemotherapy patients based on the concept of humanistic care. Cancer and its treatment impose significant physical and psychological burdens on patients. Individuals undergoing chemotherapy commonly experience anxiety, depression, fear, and fatigue, which further affect treatment adherence, quality of life, and clinical outcomes. This paper systematically reviews the major psychological characteristics of chemotherapy patients and their influencing factors, and summarizes key nursing strategies, including individualized assessment and stratified interventions, communication support and health education, as well as the integration of psychological interventions with social support. It also analyzes the effects of these nursing models on alleviating negative emotions, improving quality of life, enhancing treatment compliance, and optimizing therapeutic outcomes. The findings indicate that humanistic psychological nursing can promote patient recovery from a biopsychosocial perspective and has substantial clinical application value. However, current research is limited by small sample sizes, heterogeneous intervention models, and insufficient evidence on long-term effects. Future studies should strengthen multicenter research, establish standardized nursing pathways, and promote the integration of multidisciplinary collaboration and digital technologies to achieve standardized and continuously optimized psychological care in oncology.

Keywords Humanistic care; Psychological nursing; Cancer chemotherapy; Negative emotions; Quality of life

1 Introduction

Cancer and the treatment process can cause considerable psychological stress for patients, which in turn can further affect their physical and mental health. Many patients undergoing chemotherapy experience symptoms such as anxiety, depression, fear, and fatigue, and these issues may recur during the treatment period. Konieczny et al. (2025) found that approximately one-third to half of the patients have varying degrees of anxiety and depression symptoms, which are also quite common. During the initial stage of chemotherapy, physical discomfort is usually the most obvious, and patients are more likely to worry about the treatment outcome and side effects. Although some physical symptoms gradually improve, many patients' psychological problems persist (Kamimura et al., 2024). Additionally, side effects such as nausea and hair loss can exacerbate negative emotions, making patients more anxious and uneasy (Hu et al., 2025; Yin et al., 2025). If these psychological problems are not promptly identified and addressed, they may persist for a long time, affecting daily life, interpersonal relationships, and overall quality of life (Zhang et al., 2024; Lauter et al., 2025).

The psychological state of patients undergoing chemotherapy not only affects their subjective experience but also directly relates to treatment compliance and clinical outcomes. Emotional problems such as anxiety and depression may make it difficult for patients to adhere to the established treatment plan, reduce their enthusiasm for self-care participation, and even interfere with the smooth progress of treatment (Mustafin, 2025). In patients with gastric cancer and colon cancer, psychological distress is often associated with more severe fatigue, lower quality of life, and may also weaken the chemotherapy effect and shorten the progression-free survival period (Zhang et al., 2023; Rat et al., 2025). A meta-analysis on leukemia also pointed out that if negative emotions are not effectively handled, it will reduce treatment compliance and increase the overall physical and mental burden (Yin et al., 2025). On the contrary, providing targeted psychological support or health education during