CNS Drugs

Assessment and Management of Cognitive Function in Patients with Prostate Cancer Treated with Second-Generation Androgen Receptor Pathway Inhibitors. 10.1007/s40263-022-00913-5

Jeffrey S. Wefel, Charles J. Ryan, Julie Van, James Jackson, and Alicia K. Morgans

Introduction

Prostate cancer is typically diagnosed in older men. Because of their age, other diseases, or medication, their thinking, judgment, memory, or learning may be reduced compared with younger men. Doctors should evaluate these brain functions before starting or during a treatment for prostate cancer.

Only if the patient and the doctor know about difficulties in thinking, judgment, memory, or learning, can they choose the optimal medication for prostate cancer, get specific treatment to improve these difficulties, or look for support to facilitate daily life.

Below we explain the tests that doctors may use, and how these difficulties with mental ability can be managed.

Why do some men with prostate cancer have difficulty with thinking, judgment, memory, or learning?

Up to one in every four people with cancer has difficulty with their mental ability. The reasons for this are not fully understood but may include:

Having other diseases (such as dementia) that affect mental ability

Being depressed, in pain, or very tired due to prostate cancer



Older age

Effects of the cancer or side effects of some cancer treatments

How might difficulty with mental ability affect a person's life?

Difficulty with mental ability can affect people in different ways, such as:

Trouble doing day-to-day tasks (for example, shopping or making a meal) /

Problems with friendships and family relationships



Struggling to manage bills, look after oneself, or take medicines correctly

What tests do doctors use to check a person's mental ability?

There are many tests that doctors and specialists can use to check a man's brain function. Doctors tend to use short tests known as screening tests. If these tests show that a man might have difficulty thinking, or other difficulties, he might be invited to have additional tests with a specialist (called a neuropsychologist). Examples of tests are:



Remembering and repeating numbers or words



Drawing objects



Completing a survey

While today's tests are good, not all doctors proceed the same way. We believe that experts should agree which test is the best to use for checking difficulties in thinking, judgment, memory, or learning.

How can difficulties with mental ability be managed?

A care plan will differ from person to person, but might include:



Selecting a treatment or making changes to avoid some side effects



Sessions with a specialist to improve mental ability and learn to adapt



Physical exercise

Using memory aids

to help remember

things



Treatment for other problems such as pain, difficulty sleeping, or depression

Getting help from others with daily tasks such as banking, looking after oneself, or taking medicines



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