

ABSTRACT

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Symptom burden in glioblastoma - a prospective pilot study from diagnosis to first progression.

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INTRODUCTION: The evaluation of symptom burden, performance status and neurological function is still challenging in glioblastoma (GBM) patients. Patients may suffer from a wide spectrum of neurological symptoms like cognitive deficits, aphasia or hemiparesis, which interfere to report to comprehensive questionnaires. However, an integrated and reliable neuro-oncological assessment is key in the clinical management and in the evaluation of treatment benefits for GBM patients.

METHODS: We implemented an easy-to-use clinical toolkit for the prospective assessment and follow-up evaluation of GBM patients using the Karnofsky performance status (KPS), the National Institute of Health Stroke Scale (NIH-SS) and simple scores for the evaluation of key symptoms like fatigue, depression and headache.

RESULTS: We prospectively followed 50 patients. The composite score (headache, depression and fatigue), fatigue alone, the NIHSS and the KPS were suitable biomarkers to evaluate symptom burden in GBM patients and indicate clinical disease progression.

DISCUSSION/CONCLUSION: The proposed clinical toolkit seems feasible in routine clinical practice and reflects changes in symptom burden in different stages of the post-surgical course of GBM patients in this monocentric clinical pilot trial.

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