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**Effect of Art Therapy Intervention during Hemodialysis (HD) Session on Depression and Quality of Life Scores and the Patients' Perception of Dialysis Process**

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**Objectives:** Depression is the most common psychological problem in patients undergoing HD, which is closely associated with hospitalizations and death. The application of art therapy intervention has been reported to impose a positive impact on the psychological condition and quality of life (QoL) of patients with chronic disease, however there are few studies to investigate the effect of art therapy on depression and the patients' perception of dialysis process in HD patients.

**Methods:** Art therapy intervention including drawing and other art activities was conducted by structured program in 9 clinically stable HD patients (Age  $61.9 \pm 9.8$  years, M:F 5:4) for 4 weeks (total 4 sessions per each patient) in the HD Unit of Ewha Womans University Seoul Hospital. Art therapy intervention was done individually during HD session for 40 minutes (unfreezing phase, doing phase, and integrating phase) by trained art therapist. Short form geriatric depression scale (SGDS) and medical outcomes survey 36-item short form (SF-36) were assessed before and after art therapy. The qualitative data collection was also performed through artworks that were completed during the art therapy sessions, researcher's observation, clinical notes, and audio recording files of all sessions.

**Results:** Art therapy for 4 weeks during HD session resulted in no significant changes in depression and QoL scores. However, qualitative analysis revealed that art therapy facilitated HD patients to express their feelings related to the illness experiences and provide stability of mind, which was frequently described by participating patients as a platform to reflect themselves and their surroundings, to have a fun during tedious and painful HD process and to help them with having a more optimistic view of life.

**Conclusions:** Art therapy whilst receiving HD in eligible patients can be useful as an alternative and complementary intervention for caring for patients' psychological and emotional needs.