A randomized, controlled, prospective study was carried out in two Oncology Units of Spain from January 2011 to January 2013 to determine the efficacy, tolerability, and patient satisfaction of sublingual fentanyl citrate (SLF) and oral morphine solution (OM) in the treatment of breakthrough cancer pain (BtCP).

A total of 40 patients participated. Mean doses of opioids for BtCP were 235±23.4 μg (SLF) and 38±5.2 mg (OM).

The mean pain intensity levels were significantly lower with SLF than OM at 3 days, 7 days, 15 days, and 30 days.

SLF provided significantly faster relief for BtCP than OM with a shorter dose titration period, better satisfaction scores and with a very good safety profile.

Administration of SLF might provide a more effective treatment option than oral morphine for BtCP.

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