

Center of Research on Psychology in Somatic diseases

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Survivorship and life style issues

Workshop 1: Workshop for nurses and medical staff



- 12.3% of American women will be diagnosed with BC.
- 2014 (United States):
 - Incidence: 234.000
 - Deaths: 40.000
 - Percent surviving 5 years (2004-2010): 89.2%
- Increasing number of breast cancer survivors
 - Prevalence in 2011: 2.899.726 women with BC



Survivorship definitions

- Definition survivorship¹:
 - Anyone who has been diagnosed with cancer, from the time of diagnosis, until end of life.
- Definition long-term survivorship²:
 - Every person still alive 5 years after diagnosis.
- Survivorship research:
 - Focus on <u>adverse</u> effects of cancer and its treatment, and to <u>optimize the outcomes</u> for cancer survivors and their families.

² American Cancer Society; ¹ National Coalition for Cancer Survivorship



3 stages of survivorship¹

- 1. Acute:
 - From diagnosis till end of initial treatment
 - Main issues: treatment and side effects
- 2. Extended:
 - From completion of treatment, remission or both
 - Main issues: watchful waiting, follow-ups, possibly treatment
- 3. Permanent survival:
 - Extended disease-free survival when likelihood of recurrence is very low



After initial treatment – now what?

- Breast cancer can be a life-altering experience.
- Initial treatment may be over, the effects of cancer and its treatment are often not.
- After treatment, a patient will look and feel different.
 - Emotionally
 - Physically
- Health concerns and difficulty moving forward are common.



Common late effects

- Some experience a healthy cancer survivorship, some don't
- Common late effects:
 - Emotional distress and depression (14%)
 - Fatigue (20-30%)
 - Insomnia (40%)
 - Fear of recurrence (25%)
 - Sexuality and intimacy issues (20-30%)



Late effects of treatment

- Late effects of chemotherapy:
 - Early menopause (including fertility issues)
 - Weight gain
 - Fatigue
 - Cognitive problems (chemo-brain)
- Late effects of radiotherapy:
 - Changes in the look and feel of the breast
 - Lymphedema



More attention is needed

- More attention needed for side-effects¹. One-third of BC survivors reported >5 unmet needs after treatment.
- However²;
 - Follow-up mainly focused on detection of recurrence
 - Still lack of evidence-based treatment/support programs
 - Oncologists often not specialized in wide-ranging sideeffects
 - Increased rehabilitation efforts will entail additional costs to the health care system



Survivorship care plans (SCPs)

- How to prepare patients for survivorship phase?
 - SCPs: recommended by IOM since 2006¹
 - Aim: address unmet needs, enhance survivorship care coordination, and physician-physician communication
 - Content: info on treatment, side-effects, follow-up care
 - Few measurable benefits but high levels of satisfaction²

New RCTs needed on content, form and delivery of SCPs

¹ Institute of Medicine; ² Brennan et al., Br J Cancer. 2014; 111(10):1899-908. TILBURG • 🗱 • UNIVI



A healthy lifestyle includes:

- Maintaining a healthy weight
 - Decreases the risk of BC recurrence, BC mortality and overall mortality
- Eating a healthy diet
 - Promotes overall health
 - may help protect against different types of cancer and other diseases



Healthy lifestyle II

A healthy lifestyle includes:

- Physical activity (exercise)
 - Helps to maintain a healthy weight
 - Lowers the risk of heart disease, stroke and diabetes.
 - Might lower the risk of BC recurrence, BC-specific mortality, and overall mortality.
- Not smoking
 - Decreases the risk of BC recurrence, BC-specific mortality, and overall mortality



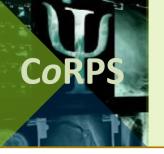
Other treatment options

- Common late effects and treatment options:
 - Depression: antidepressants, CBT and physical exercise
 - Fatigue: Multidisciplinary approach. Difficult to treat.
 - Insomnia: nurse-delivered CBT for insomnia
 - Fear of recurrence: accurate information, mindfulness
 - Sexuality/intimacy issues; Multidisciplinary approach



It's not over when its over. The long-term management of breast cancer survivors deserves more attention and requires a multidisciplinary approach





Thank you for your attention!



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