

Predictors of quality of life over time among ethnically diverse breast cancer survivors

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Objective: Few studies have examined predictors of quality of life (QOL) of breast cancer survivors over time.

Methods: Breast cancer survivors (n=116) were asked to complete measures of QOL, mood, spirituality, and social support every 6 months from 2-4 years post diagnosis.

Results: Overall QOL at 4 years was predicted by previous physical and functional well-being, the breast cancer-specific items, and vigor and current levels of social support (Adj $R^2=.72$, $F=30.53$, $p=.000$). Physical QOL was predicted by previous levels of physical and functional well-being and current levels of functional and social/family well-being (Adj $R^2=.84$, $F=44.30$, $p=.000$). Functional well-being was predicted by prior levels of physical, functional, and social/family well-being and current levels of physical well-being and vigor (Adj $R^2=.72$, $F=30.53$, $p=.000$). Emotional well-being was predicted by previous levels of emotional well-being and current physical well-being, the breast cancer-specific items, and anxiety (Adj $R^2=.60$, $F=26.30$, $p=.000$). Social/family well-being was predicted by previous levels of social/family well-being, social support, and confusion (Adj $R^2=.71$, $F=34.18$, $p=.000$). The breast cancer-specific items were predicted by age, previous levels of the breast cancer-specific items, confusion and current levels of emotional and functional well-being and spirituality (Adj $R^2=.58$, $F=17.57$, $p=.000$).

Conclusions: Overall and specific dimensions of QOL at 4 years were predicted by different combinations of QOL, mood, and spirituality. Interventions should be tailored to which dimensions of QOL are affected and other types of QOL as well as social support, mood, and spirituality as coping mechanisms that influence the specific dimension of QOL affected.

Biography

Ellen G. Levine received her Ph.D. in Medical (Clinical) Psychology in 1990 and M.P.H in Epidemiology in 1986. She is currently a Senior Scientist at San Francisco State University (SFSU), a contributing faculty member at Walden University and a member of the Health Psychology Program at the Alameda Health Care System in Oakland, CA. She has extensive training and experience in medical psychology and behavioral medicine, and has worked and conducted research with cancer patients for more than 25 years. She is a member of the board of directors of the American Psychosocial Oncology Society and was the founder and chair of the Spirituality Special Interest Group as well as the Society of Behavioral Medicine.