

Mental Health Effects of Receiving a Breast Cancer Diagnose

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Introduction

More than 2 million women worldwide were diagnosed with breast cancer in 2018, making it the most common cancer among women. Breast cancer can change a person's life course, among other things, because of the profound changes in body image and the great uncertainty surrounding the disease's course, treatment, and prognosis. As a consequence of this, patients might encounter difficulties in a number of essential areas, such as their relationships with others.

This life-altering event causes significant psychological distress in many patients [4]. Mental health issues can be exacerbated or caused by the diagnosis itself. For many survivors of primary or recurrent breast cancer, the actual cancer diagnosis was the most challenging step. In recent years, primary breast cancer remission rates in North America have reached up to 96% [8]. However, despite the rise in breast cancer survival rates, some survivors continue to suffer from low quality of life and psychological distress.

Description

Despite numerous publications on the topic, the nature and frequency of psychological symptoms experienced by breast cancer patients remain unknown. Oncology broadly defines psychological distress as a negative cognitive, behavioral, emotional, social, spiritual, or psychological experience that hinders coping with cancer [1]. The level of distress experienced by cancer patients can range from mild (common feelings of vulnerability) to crippling. Some studies have examined the increased risk of stress-related disorders immediately following a breast cancer diagnosis, highlighting the distressing nature of the diagnosis and treatment processes, which merit separate research. Despite the fact that diagnosis-specific distress is distinct from overall cancer experience distress [2] many existing studies fail to distinguish between responses to the acute post-diagnosis phase and more general responses to cancer.

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patients can range from mild (common feelings of vulnerability) to crippling. Some studies have examined the increased risk of stress-related disorders immediately following a breast cancer diagnosis, highlighting the distressing nature of the diagnosis and treatment processes, which merit separate research [5]. Despite the fact that diagnosis-specific distress is distinct from overall cancer experience distress; many existing studies fail to distinguish between responses to the acute post-diagnosis phase and more general responses to cancer.

Conclusion

Stress related to the diagnosis Shock and denial are the most common stress responses to receiving a cancer diagnosis. Despite their best efforts to remain focused, patients may have difficulty processing information when confronted with this unexpected occurrence. Patients may be experiencing shock, distress, uncertainty, and existential and anticipatory anxiety in response to this new information and the perceived threat it poses, as indicated by the fact that non-specific distress was more common (39%) after the diagnosis. This finding is consistent with a literature review that found a prevalence of 32.8% of distress symptoms in breast cancer patients. However, at the time of data collection, some studies included patients who had already begun treatment. When a patient is diagnosed with breast cancer, their perspectives on the future shift because they are forced to suddenly consider the possibility of losses, "unfinished business," and death while also managing their loved ones' reactions. These adjustments to their life plans may cause significant distress for many patients. In a study that looked at how distress symptoms progressed in breast cancer patients, high levels of distress were found following a diagnosis. The degree of psychological distress can either decrease over time during the treatment and remission phases or continue to rise following diagnosis, which can have a negative impact on the immune system and treatment efficacy.

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