Impact of Spirituality on Quality of Life (QoL) in Lower-Income, Predominantly Minority Cancer Survivors
Michelle Martin, Polly Kratt, Robert Oster, Mary Evans, Hwanseok Choi, Shiquina Andrews, Maria Pisu
University of Alabama at Birmingham

Background
In breast and prostate cancer survivors, spiritual well-being is associated with better physical and psychosocial outcomes.

Little is known however, about the role of spirituality among lower income, minority survivors.

Similarly, spirituality in diverse cancer patient groups is relatively understudied.

Aim
To examine the association of spirituality with quality of life outcomes in low income, predominantly minority cancer survivors.

Hypothesis
Patients reporting greater spirituality at baseline will report better quality of life at 1 and 6 months post-baseline

Methods

Design
A retrospective analysis of data collected within our randomized controlled trial of a cancer education intervention

Participants received a program of 4 weekly sessions

Intervention groups combined for this study

Recruitment
Patients were primarily recruited from an urban hospital oncology clinic that provided care to medically uninsured individuals

Measures
Sociodemographic and clinical variables (i.e., cancer type and time since diagnosis)

Measured at baseline, 1 month, and 6 months:

- Spirituality (FACIT-SP)
  - Meaning
    - Feelings of peace
    - Sense of purpose in life
    - Belief that life can be productive
  - Faith
    - Comfort found in faith or spiritual beliefs
    - Strength found in faith or spiritual beliefs
    - Belief that “things will be okay”
  - Quality of Life (FACT-G)
  - Emotional Well Being (EWB)
  - Social Well-Being (SWB)
  - Functional Well-Being (FWB)

Results

Demographics
The majority of participants had a household income < $15,000 per year

Percent of Sample (N=140)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subscale</th>
<th>Percent</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>African American</td>
<td>80%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not married</td>
<td>73%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unemployed</td>
<td>89%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&lt; H5 education</td>
<td>22%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mean</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Age</td>
<td>54.2 years</td>
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Participant Cancer Types

- Breast
- Colon/ColoRectal
- Hematologic
- Lung
- Prostate
- GI Tract
- Head & Neck
- Other

Stability of Spirituality Scales
- No difference between Spiritual scales over time or by group

Spirituality Max & Mean Scores

Conclusions
- In lower income, primarily minority cancer survivors:
  - Only Meaning (and not Faith) predicted QoL outcomes at 1 and 6 months post-intervention (14-41% variance accounted for in the QoL models)
  - Spirituality appears to be a stable construct over time
  - Findings support the conceptual distinction between having faith (perhaps reflecting patient religiosity) and having meaning in life

Clinical Implications
- Integrating spirituality when delivering care to cancer patients, perhaps even delving into the greater meaning aspect, may positively affect survivors’ longer term quality of life

Future Research
- Understanding the mechanisms by which spirituality influences quality of life is an important area of further study

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