Differences in Quality of Life Between Cancer Treatment and No Cancer Treatment Groups for Low-Income Cancer Survivors

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Abstract

Chemotherapy and radiation treatment affects patients in many ways including fatigue, sexual dysfunction, or the ability to consume food. Low-income cancer survivors are at increased risk due to factors such as inadequate access to health care or lack of knowledge and education. This study is a secondary analysis of Dr. Martha Meraviglia’s work entitled Promoting Healthy Behaviors in Low Income Cancer Survivors. Fifty-one participants completed three instruments at baseline on personal characteristics, cancer characteristics, and quality of life (QOL) which were used to examine differences between patients who were receiving treatment (chemotherapy, radiation, or both) and those who were not receiving any treatment. There were no significant differences between groups on overall QOL however low-income patients receiving treatment reported lower QOL especially for physical and functional well-being and higher spiritual QOL. Further research may be able to describe the patterns in quality of life and a more personalized plan of care can potentially lead to smoother and faster recovery.