A1.4: Results of a Home-based Walking Intervention for Patients Undergoing Cancer Treatment

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Abstract:
Introduction: Prior studies of exercise among cancer patients and survivors indicates that this health-promoting activity has many positive benefits and few notable risks. We evaluated the impact of a walking intervention on fatigue, emotional distress, symptom experience, sleep disturbance and quality of life.

Method(s): 126 patients with breast, prostate, and other cancers were randomized to a home-based walking intervention or usual care. Outcome measures were: the Physical Activity Questionnaire (PAQ); Piper Fatigue Scale (PFS); Profile of Mood States Scale Shortened (POMS); and The Symptom Distress Scale (SDS). Linear regression was used to evaluate pre-to-post intervention change outcomes between groups. The primary analysis was based on Intent-to-Treat (ITT), in which group comparisons were made regardless of the degree of adherence to their assigned group’s protocol. Since, contrary to study instructions, 12% of the control subjects performed exercise at a level at least equivalent to what was assigned for the exercise group, a dose-response analysis was used to evaluate outcomes based on the actual amount of exercise performed, regardless of group assignment.

Results: The mean (SD) age of patients was 60.2 (10.6). Diagnoses included prostate (55.6%) and breast (32.5%) cancer. Treatment included external beam radiation (52.3%) and chemotherapy (34.9%). An increase in aerobic exercise was significantly associated with less fatigue when measured by either PFS (p <0.05), SDS fatigue subscale (p <0.01), or POMS fatigue subscale (p <0.01), after controlling for exercise group assignment, age, cancer treatment period, baseline exercise level, and baseline fatigue level. At the end of the study period participants who had engaged in more aerobic exercise self-reported significantly less fatigue
over the past week (p < 0.001) than participants who had engaged in less aerobic exercise. In the dose-response analysis, participants who exercised more over the study period had 13% more vigor (p < 0.01) than those who were sedentary.

**Discussion & Conclusions:** Key findings suggest that patients who exercise during cancer treatment experience less fatigue, less mood emotional distress, and more vigor than those who are sedentary.

**Abstract History:**
This abstract has not been presented or accepted for presentation in whole or in part at the SNRS or other scientific meeting.

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