

Title: A pilot study investigating the predisposition to physical exercise in cancer patients: reality and preferences.

Avancini A.[1], Pala V.[2], Krogh V.[2], Sieri S.[2], Mariani L.[2], Cafaro D.[3], Tortora G.[3], Lanza M.[4], Pilotto S.[3]

[1] PhD student in Clinical and Experimental, Biomedical Sciences, Department of Medicine, University of Verona, Italy
[2] Epidemiology and Prevention Unit, Fondazione IRCCS Istituto Nazionale dei Tumori, Milan, Italy
[3] Medical Oncology, University of Verona, Azienda Ospedaliera Universitaria Integrata, Verona, Italy
[4] Department of Neurosciences, Biomedicine and Movement Sciences, University of Verona, Italy

Abstract (250-300 words)

Aims

Physical exercise (EX) provides benefits for cancer survivors(1). Nevertheless, most cancer survivors are insufficiently active (2). The purpose of this study is to provide an assessment of EX preferences in the context of a monocentric cohort of oncological patients.

Methods

A questionnaire to assess EX preferences, physical activity (PA), demographic and health information was designed for use in cancer patients. A representative sample of patients from the Medical Oncology Unit of the Verona Hospital were asked to anonymously complete the questionnaire. PA behavior was assessed by leisure score index (LSI) using the validated Godin's Leisure Time Exercise Questionnaire (GLTEQ) (3). The EX preferences questions were drawn from Jones and Courneya questionnaire (4).

Results

The percentage of patients resulting sufficiently active (LSI>23) was low (7%). The majority of the patients (51%) expressed strong interest to start a physical exercise program, while 29% expressed less stronger but still a relevant interest in participating in an EX program.
Regarding the preferred source of PA information, "the oncologist" was the preferred category (49%), followed by the physiotherapist (27%). The preferred way of information delivery was "face-to-face" (77%).
Working out in groups was preferred by 42% of patients, whereas 26% choose an individually supervised home program. The preferred composition of EX group was with "other cancer patients" (27%). The favorite places to exercise were outdoors (32%) or a fitness center for adapted physical activity (28%). Two times/week (45%), and three times/week (31%) were the preferred EX frequencies. "Mild" was the preferred EX intensity (56%), followed by "moderate" (39%).

Conclusion

Only a small percentage of cancer patients was found to be sufficiently active, but about 80% were willing to start EX programs. These preliminary results encourage interventional studies in order to improve PA in cancer patients, offering personalized options based on patient's EX preferences.

References

1. Schmitz KH, et al.. American college of sports medicine roundtable on exercise guidelines for cancer survivors. Vol. 42, Medicine and Science in Sports and Exercise. 2010. p. 1409–26.
2. McGowan EL, et al.. Physical Activity Preferences Among a Population-Based Sample of Colorectal Cancer Survivors. Oncol Nurs Forum 2013;40(1):44–52.
3. Amireault S, et al.The use of the Godin-Shephard Leisure-Time Physical Activity Questionnaire in oncology research: a systematic review. BMC Med Res Methodol. 2015;15(1).
4. Jones LW, Courneya KS. Exercise Counseling and Programming Preferences of Cancer Survivors. 2002;10(4):208–15.

Biography(100-150 words)

Alice Avancini is a young doctor in Preventive and Adapted Exercise Science. She is a PhD student in Clinical and Experimental Biomedical Sciences in University of Verona. Her main interest regard the promotion on healthy lifestyle in healthy people and in persons with chronic disease, in particular in cancer survivors.

Presenting author details

Full name: Alice Avancini
Session name/ number: Cancer Survivors/14
Category: Poster
Email id: alice.avancini
Contact number: 3403624264