

Body weight, physical activity levels, and dietary changes in cancer survivors attending Sydney Survivorship Clinic



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Background

There is growing evidence to suggest obesity and sedentary lifestyle increase the risk of a cancer recurrence. Many gain weight during adjuvant treatment, likely as a result of cancer and supportive care medications, and lower physical activity (PA) levels. Our aim was to investigate cancer survivor's PA levels, and weight and dietary changes after anti-cancer treatment.

Methods

Patients: Adult patients with localised cancer (breast, colorectal and since May 2014 haematological malignancy) are eligible for referral to the Survivorship Clinic after completion of primary treatments (surgery, chemotherapy and/or radiotherapy).

Data collection: Patients complete questionnaires including assessment of diet and exercise prior to attending the clinic. Weight history was collected from patient's medical records.

Current data are from 12th September 2013 to 11th Sept 2014.

At the initial visit: Patients are seen in a multi-disciplinary clinic that includes assessment by a Dietitian and Accredited Exercise Physiologist.

Results: Baseline characteristics

Table 1: Baseline characteristics for patients attending Sydney Survivorship Clinic (n=100)

	N
Age (years): median	54 (range 23 to 80)
Female	78 (78%)
Anti-cancer treatment:	
Surgery	86 (86%)
Radiotherapy	44 (44%)
Chemotherapy	89 (89%)
Body mass index, mean, kg/m ² (n=91)	27.1 (SD 6.6) (range 15.8 – 53.6)
Duration between cancer diagnosis (or surgery) & 1 st clinic: mean, years (n=92)*	1.8 yrs (SD 2.12) (range 0.13 to 11.2)

Results: Physical activity levels

27/68 patients are currently meeting recommended physical activity guidelines at the time of consultation at Survivorship Clinic.

Table 2: Self-reported minutes of exercise per week

	Walking (min)	Moderate Intensity Exercise (min) (n=64)	Vigorous Intensity Exercise (min) (n=67)
Mean	236	74	66
Median	180	.	.
SD	294	186	124
Range	0-2100	0-1200	0-720

Results: Sedentary Behaviour

Table 3: Self-reported minutes of sitting time (n=74)

	Sitting Time – Weekday (min)	Sitting Time – Weekend Day (min)
Mean	354	336
Median	300	300
Range	60-960	30-960

Results: Body composition changes

Table 4: Changes in weight of patients from time of initial oncology consultation to 1st Survivorship Clinic visit

	N
Weight Stable	2
Lost weight	20
Gained weight (0.1kg and above)	67

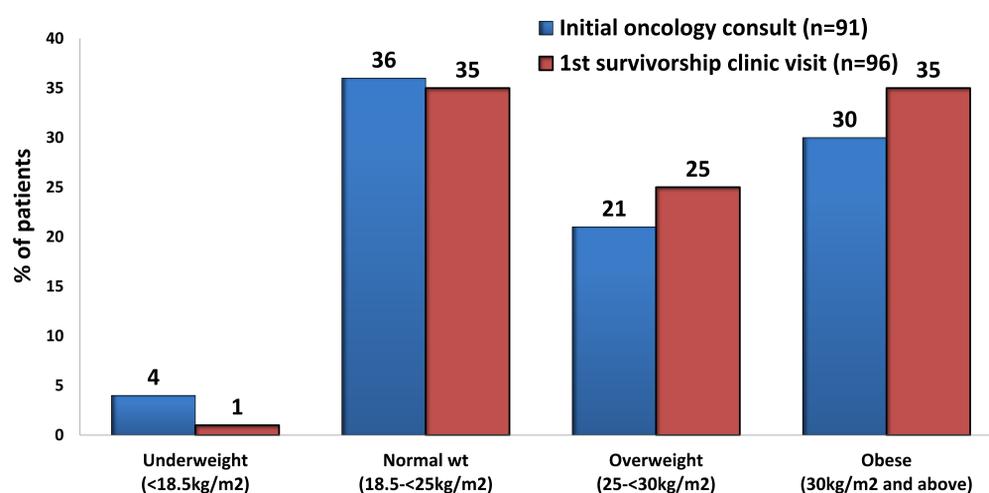


Figure 1: Comparison of Body Mass Index (BMI) from time of initial oncology consultation to 1st Survivorship Clinic visit

Results: Dietary changes

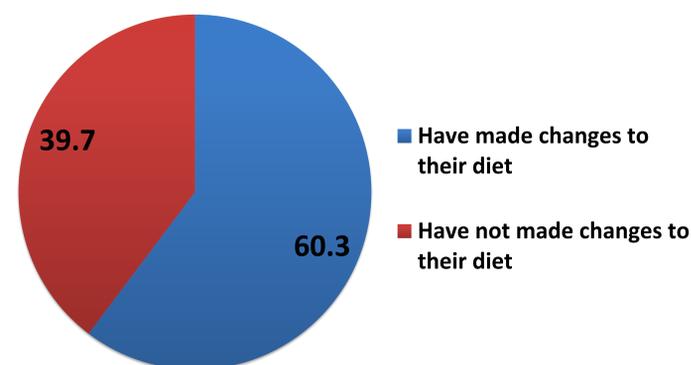


Figure 2: Percentage of patients who have self-reported a change in their diet since their cancer diagnosis

78 (80.4%) patients seen required further follow up by either the Dietitian or Exercise Physiologist.

Conclusions

More than half the patients were overweight before starting treatment and three quarters gained weight during treatment. The majority of patients are not meeting recommended guidelines for moderate intensity PA and spend an average of 6 hours/day sitting. The Survivorship Clinic has implemented a number of lifestyle interventions to address these lifestyle concerns for cancer survivors.

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