Cancer Survivorship: Navigating the Road to Wellness

Darcy Burbage, RN, MSN, AOCN, CBCN
Survivorship Nurse Navigator

Cindy Waddington, RN, MSN, AOCN
Clinical Nurse Specialist & Certified Wellness Coach

Helen F Graham Cancer Center

Objectives

• Review the history of the survivorship movement
• Describe the most common physical and psychosocial long-term and late effects of cancer treatment along with management strategies
• Review survivorship treatment summary and follow-up guidelines

Who is a survivor?

• Many definitions exist

• “From diagnosis through the balance of life…”
• Expanded to include family, friends, and caregivers

• Some individuals don’t like the term or don’t consider themselves a “survivor”

Who is a survivor?

National Coalition for Cancer Survivorship: www.canceradvocacy.org; retrieved May 23, 2012
Who is a survivor?

- According to the American Cancer Society (2012) there are over 12 million cancer survivors in the United States

- 7 million are 65 years or older

- One in twenty adults are a cancer survivor
  - Breast (22%)
  - Prostate (19%)
  - Colorectal (10%)

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History of the Survivorship Movement

- Prevention & Detection of New Cancers
- Surveillance and Follow-Up care
- Addressing Cancer Sequelae

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Commission on Cancer Accreditation Standards

- To be implemented by 2015:
  - Standard 3.1 Patient Navigation Process
  - Standard 3.2 Psychosocial Distress Screening
  - Standard 3.3 Survivorship Care Plan

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*Institute of Medicine. (2006). Commission on Cancer Accreditation Standards*  

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Potential side effects of treatment

• It’s all relative
• Risk depends on factors specific for the individual patient
  • Type and stage of cancer
  • Treatment received
  • Overall health before and after treatment


Potential side effects of treatment

• Long-term effect
  • Develop during treatment and may become chronic, linger on, or improve over time
    • Fatigue
  • Late effect
    • Delayed; can surface months or years after treatment is completed
      • Myelodysplastic syndrome (MDS)


Physical Adjustments to Life After Cancer

• Surgery
  • Functional changes
  • Changes in fertility/sexual function
  • Bowel and bladder control issues
  • Impaired breathing
  • Lymphedema
  • Pain/scar tightness/numbness/tingling
  • Changes in body image


Physical Adjustments to Life After Cancer

• Radiation Therapy
  • Fatigue
  • Skin changes
  • Cosmetic changes
  • Cognitive changes
  • Pulmonary fibrosis
  • Xerostomia
  • Changes in bowel/bladder function


Physical Adjustments to Life After Cancer

- Chemotherapy
- Premature menopause/infertility
- Cognitive changes
- Fatigue
- Osteoporosis
- Neuropathy
- Weight changes
- Secondary cancers
- Pulmonary/cardiac concerns
- Impaired immune system/MDS


Physical Adjustments to Life After Cancer

- Endocrine Therapy
- Hot flashes
- Weight gain
- Gynecomastia
- Mood changes
- Osteoporosis
- Vaginal atrophy
- Decreased libido


Physical Adjustments to Life After Cancer

- Sexuality and Fertility
  - Body image
  - Change in sensation
  - Loss of desire
  - Fatigue
  - Premature menopause
  - Can I have children? Is it safe for me to have children?


Psychosocial Adjustments to Life After Cancer

- Fear of recurrence
- Body image concerns
- Changes in relationships/responsibilities
- Financial/Employment/health insurance

Risk Factors for Distress

- History of psychiatric disorder/substance abuse
- Inadequate socioeconomic resources
- Underlying co-morbidities
- Limited access to medical care
- Young/dependent children
- Family/caregiver conflict


Strategies for Managing Psychosocial Concerns

- Encourage patients to
  - Rely on reliable sources of information such as their treatment team or cancer resource library
  - Talk with supportive friends/family; join a support group; seek individual counseling
  - Ask for and accept help
  - Set boundaries
  - Learn new ways of coping; such as deep breathing, mind/body practices
  - Give back or help others through volunteer programs
  - Consider lifestyle modifications

Surveillance and Health Promotion

- Medical history and physical exam every 3 to 6 months for 3 years, then every 6 months for 2 years, then annually
- Specific imaging test/lab work recommendations are disease specific
- Consider genetic counseling and testing
- Lifestyle modifications
- Report any new symptom that lasts a week or longer
- Continue with regular medical and dental screenings


Survivorship Treatment Summary

- Comprehensive summary of cancer history, treatment received, follow-up recommendations
- Not intended to replace medical history or detailed chart information
- Templates available on-line
  - www.journeyforward.org
  - www.cancer.net/patient/survivorship
  - www.livestrongcareplan.org

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Nursing Considerations

- Cancer is becoming known as a chronic disease
- Treatment related side effects may linger on or appear years later
- Patient education must be ongoing & include signs and symptoms to report to their health care team
- Nurses are in a pivotal role to promote adherence to follow-up plan and continued surveillance

Survivorship Wellness

Thank you!

From Cancer Patient to Cancer Survivor
Lost in Transition

- Download electronic version for free
In a nutshell.....

“Being cancer free does not mean being free of cancer.”

Julia Rowland, PhD
Director, Office of Cancer Survivorship
(http://dccps.nci.nih.gov/ocs/)

Domains QOL

As cancer and cancer treatment affect all domains of quality of life:
• Physical
• Psychological
• Social
• Spiritual
So should survivorship care

Teachable Moment

• “I feel like I’ve been given a second chance and I want to make the most of it.”
• “I want to do everything I can to keep this cancer from coming back.”
• “Getting cancer was a wake-up call for me.”
• “I can’t put this off any longer.”
Cancer Care Navigation

- Wellness Navigation
- Mind, Body and Spirit Wellness Team
  - Multidisciplinary approach
  - Navigation of wellness options specific to the needs of cancer survivors
  - Education regarding complementary care modalities
  - Risk vs benefit
  - How to find a practitioner
  - Discussing complementary care with physician

Spiritual Wellness

- Mindful Meditation
- Mindful Eating
- Wellness Yoga
- Om Yoga

Healthy Steps

- Wellness Coaching
- Scrapbooking
- Day of Hope
- Art programs

Philosophy of Healing

- Healing – the inner process through which a person becomes whole
- Patients have often felt they have lost all control with cancer treatment
- Engaging a patient in personal healing can make a transformative difference in quality of life
- Recognize the unique role that a patient can play in their own healing.
- Awareness that it reaches beyond therapy to how patients intend to live each day for the rest of their life.

HFGCC Wellness Programs

- Spiritual Wellness
- Mindful Meditation
- Mindful Eating
- Wellness Yoga
- Om Yoga

Wellness Coaching

- One on one coaching for those who are ready to make lifestyle change (nutrition, weight, exercise, stress, meaning and purpose)
- 12 week program
- Wellness Vision (includes motivators, roadblocks and strategies)
- SMART goals
Mindful Meditation
• Based on the work of Jon Kabat-Zinn
  Mindfulness Based Stress Reduction
• University of Massachusetts Medical Center
• Stress, Pain, and Illness: Facing the Full Catastrophe
• Practicing the art of embracing the full catastrophe – rather than destroying or robbing us of our power – strengthen us

Mindfulness
• Mind full
• Mindfulness – paying attention, in a particular when, non-judgmentally, to what is happening in the present moment
• Not the past, not the future
• Recognizing what is going on under the surface

Mindful Eating
• Based on MBSR
• Access and use inner and outer wisdom
• Mindful choices
• CNS and RD team
• Mindfulness of level of hunger, level of fullness, taste satisfaction, choices, patterns of behavior
• Next 8 week class begins 9/26

Wellness Yoga (chair yoga)
• Based on Chair Yoga for Good Living for people living with chronic pain and disability from the American Pain Foundation
• Breathwork, meditation, yoga postures
• Reflection for practice
• (mindfulness, being in community, self-compassion, honoring our limits, balance, foundations)
Om Yoga
- Specific to female cancer survivors
- Taught by a cancer survivor
- On the mat, done in a circle
- Current class has been progressing
- Recent research supporting yoga as a method to decrease muscle and joint pain with aromatase inhibitors

Healthy Steps
- Exercise class developed for breast cancer survivors and has extended out to all chronic conditions
- Listed on NCI website for research-tested intervention programs
- Opening exercises designed for opening the lymphatic system
- Sit down or stand up

Community Programs
- The Cancer Support Community
- Delaware Breast Cancer Coalition
- American Cancer Society & other cancer site-specific organization
- Living Beyond Breast Cancer
- Massage
- Senior Centers
- Community meditation programs
- Acupuncture

Cognitive Changes
- “Chemo brain”, hormone therapy
- Many factors can make worse (stress, pain, fatigue, sleep disturbances, anxiety)
- Impacts self-esteem and confidence
- Yoga
- Healthy steps
- Meditation
- Wellness coaching
Summary

• Multiple long-term and late effects
• Include individuals as a partner in their care
• Offering options
• Requires new skills
• Benefits of any given modality will overflow into areas of life other than those originally intended