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Perceptions of Patients on Lifestyle Habits and Quality of Life During Cancer Treatment

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Background:

Lifestyle habits, including physical activity, nutrition, and emotional health, play a crucial role for individuals undergoing cancer treatment. Understanding how patients perceive these habits during their oncologic journey can help guide more effective and patient-centered supportive care strategies.

Methods:

This cross-sectional observational study analyzed responses from an online questionnaire completed by patients undergoing or having completed cancer treatment. The survey included questions on demographics, cancer history, treatment modalities, lifestyle behaviors, physical activity frequency, and perceptions of the importance of discussing lifestyle habits in oncology care. Descriptive statistics were used to summarize the data.

Results:

A total of 433 participants responded to the survey. Most respondents were female and between 40–65 years of age. Physical activity levels varied: many reported engaging in exercise 1–2 times per week or 3–5 times per week, while a significant subgroup reported no regular exercise. Despite this variability, the vast majority of patients rated discussions about physical activity as “very important” or “important” during oncology care. Barriers commonly included were fatigue, pain, and emotional distress. Patients who maintained some level of physical activity reported improved well-being, sense of control, and perceived quality of life. Similar patterns were observed regarding the perceived importance of discussing nutrition and weight management during treatment.

Conclusions:

Patients highly value the integration of lifestyle counseling—particularly regarding physical activity—into their oncologic care. Many of them faced challenges in maintaining healthy habits due to treatment-related symptoms, suggesting a need for structured, individualized exercise and lifestyle-support programs. Enhancing professional guidance in these areas may positively impact quality of life throughout the cancer continuum.

Keywords

exercise oncology
cancer survivorship
physical activity
lifestyle behaviors

Conflict of Interest & Ethical Approval

yes

Abstract submitters declaration

yes

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