Obesity and Psychosocial Well-Being among Patients with Cancer

In a study published in Psycho-Oncology, excess weight was linked with poorer psychosocial health among older adults diagnosed with breast cancer or prostate cancer. The association was not seen in older patients with colon cancer, however.

In the study of 4,159 patients, obesity was consistently associated with a greater burden of symptoms and with experiences of distress among patients with breast or prostate cancer. Few weight-based differences were observed among patients with colon cancer, but this group tended to have significant symptoms and distress regardless of patients’ weight.

Across all patients, the most frequent problems related to sleeping, finances, feeling anxious or fearful, pain, feeling down or depressed, managing emotions, and, fear of medical procedures.

“These findings among a large cohort of patients provide insight into the impact of obesity during the cancer care trajectory and can provide guidance in the development and implementation of supportive care services for this ‘at-risk’ population,” the authors wrote.

Additional Information

Link to Study: https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1002/pon.5181

About Journal

Psycho-Oncology is concerned with the psychological, social, behavioral, and ethical aspects of cancer. This subspeciality addresses the two major psychological dimensions of cancer: the psychological responses of patients to cancer at all stages of the disease, and that of their families and caretakers; and the psychological, behavioral and social factors that may influence the disease process. Psycho-oncology is an area of multi-disciplinary interest and has boundaries with the major specialities in oncology: the clinical disciplines (surgery, medicine, pediatrics, radiotherapy), epidemiology, immunology, endocrinology, biology, pathology, bioethics, palliative care, rehabilitation medicine, clinical trials research and decision making, as well as psychiatry and psychology.

This international journal is published twelve times a year and will consider contributions to research of clinical and theoretical interest. Topics covered are wide-ranging and relate to the psychosocial aspects of cancer and AIDS-related tumors, including: epidemiology, quality of life, palliative and supportive care, psychiatry, psychology, sociology, social work, nursing and educational issues.

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Language:

English