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Evidence for the Use of Exercise in Patients with Breast Cancer to Reduce Cancer-Treatment Related Fatigue

Combined Sections Meeting 2014

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Families should be informed about the management of fatigue as an integral part of total health care.

Institutions should assess the quality of fatigue management in their continuous quality improvement projects.
1. Medicare contracts should reimburse for fatigue management

2. Disability insurance should include coverage for continued effects of fatigue

Exercise has been suggested for breast cancer survivors as an intervention to reduce CRF both during and after cancer treatment.
Objective

To summarize the effects of exercise to reduce cancer-related fatigue in patients with breast cancer.
Methods for Study Selection

CINAHL & PUBMED
n = 23

Full Text Reviewed
n=10

Selected
n=5

Excluded n=5
- pilot study of article chosen n=1
- single arm design with no control group n=1
- Survey study n=1
- Brief report n=2

Excluded n=13
- duplicates n=3
- resistance training only n=1
- Pilates only n=1
- telephone survey n=1
- > breast cancer subjects n=2
- inpatient rehab n=1
- fatigue not primary outcome n=1
- self-report survey only n=1
- Cochran review n=1
- Brief report on physical activity n=1

Study Subjects

Stage I-III

< 2 years from completion of treatment

Exclusion for mental illness, CI to exercise, previously engaged in exercise or recurrent disease
Results

4/5 studies showed an improvement in fatigue

3 different outcome tools used to measure fatigue (Piper Fatigue Survey, FACT-F, Schwartz Cancer Fatigue Scale)

Length and mode of exercise intervention & follow-up varied among each study


Home based walking
14 weeks
Piper Fatigue Survey


Study Limitations

Be aware of the important role of exercise intervention for management of cancer related treatment fatigue.
Additional research to clarify optimal dosage & compare outcomes of total daily physical activity vs. formal exercise.

Evidence supports the value of exercise for individuals with cancer-related fatigue and the active role PTs can play to initiate exercise programs.