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ELEVENTH ANNUAL MEETING

EXPLORING SEXUAL DYSFUNCTION AND SEXUAL DISTRESS IN PATIENTS WITH LYMPHOMA DURING CANCER TREATMENT

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INTRODUCTION

- Lymphoma, especially non-Hodgkin lymphoma (NHL), is among the most common types of cancer in the United States.[1]
- Survival rates for both Hodgkin lymphoma (HL) and NHL have significantly improved over the last few decades.
  - 89.1% for HL[2]
  - 73.8% for NHL[3]
- Cancer survivors face unique short-term and long-term challenges to their physical and mental health, including sexual health.

AIM

To explore the prevalence and experiences of sexual dysfunction and related sexual distress in patients with lymphoma during cancer treatment

METHOD

Study Design and Methodology

- Mixed methods pilot study
- Concurrent design
- Quantitative Phase: Descriptive, cross-sectional design
- Qualitative Phase: Narrative design

Setting: Malignant Hematology Clinic, H. Lee Moffitt Cancer Center

Population: Lymphoma patients

Sample Size: 20

Sampling Method: Convenience sample

RESULTS

Eight main themes emerged:

- **Theme 3:** Emotional responses to sexual changes

  Excerpt: "I think my lack of getting a good, hard erection is probably most troubling to me."

- **Theme 7:** Coping mechanisms

  Excerpt: "Honestly, I try not to think about it."

New Insights

- Male patients may experience intense emotional responses related to their sexual changes, but they are less likely to express them.
- A female participant confirmed the incongruence between her interview narrative and Female Sexual Function Index score:

  Excerpt: "I don't think my lymphoma diagnosis has changed anything – just when I'm going through treatment … My husband's more worried about getting me sick with the close contact. So, he tried to keep his distance."

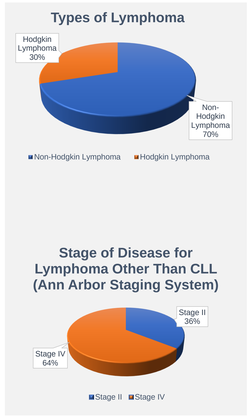


Figure 1 depicts the types of lymphoma.

Figure 2 depicts the stage of disease for lymphoma other than chronic lymphocytic leukemia (CLL).

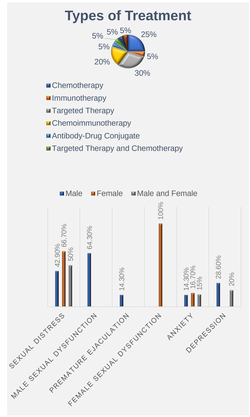


Figure 3 depicts the types of treatment received by the lymphoma patients.

Figure 4 depicts the prevalence of sexual dysfunction, sexual distress, anxiety, and depression in both male and female lymphoma patients.

Means and Standard Deviations of Health Outcomes

Instrument	Male		Female		Male and Female	
	n = 14		*n* = 6		*N* = 20	
	M	*SD*	*M*	*SD*	*M*	*SD*
FSDS-R	10.71	11.67	15.67	11.22	12.20	11.47
IIEF	39.57	21.90				
PEDT	6.21	4.30				
FSFI			14.53	7.93		
GAD-7	4.36	4.43	3.67	6.02	4.15	4.80
PHQ-9	5.86	6.19	3.83	3.43	5.25	5.50

FSDS-R = Revised Version of the Female Sexual Distress Scale (Sexual Distress); IIEF = International Index of Erectile Function (Male Sexual Function); PEDT = Premature Ejaculation Diagnostic Tool (Premature Ejaculation); FSFI = Female Sexual Function Index (Female Sexual Function); GAD-7 = Generalized Anxiety Disorder-7 (Anxiety); PHQ-9 = Patient Health Questionnaire-9-item (Depression); N = 20 (n = 14 for male and n = 6 for female); N = total number of cases; n = number of cases.

CONCLUSIONS

- The pilot study findings indicate that patients with lymphoma experienced sexual dysfunction and sexual distress during cancer treatment.
- There is a need to conduct more studies with a larger sample size to confirm these findings.
- Given the anticipated increase in the number of lymphoma survivors each year, sexual dysfunction in lymphoma patients and survivors should receive ample attention.

REFERENCES

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