

ASSOCIATIONS OF FAMILY CLOSENESS AND SEEKING SOCIAL SUPPORT WITH QUALITY OF LIFE AMONG OLDER AFRICAN AMERICAN CANCER SURVIVORS

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Funding Sources:

Georgia Cancer Coalition

National Center on Minority Health and Health Disparities #5P60 MD000525

National Institutes of Nursing Research/

National Center on Minority Health and Health Disparities Grant R01NR009271

SPECIAL THANKS

Cancer Survivors of Grady Cancer Center of Excellence

Grady Health Care System



BACKGROUND

- ▣ African Americans continue to experience the greatest burden from cancer
- ▣ Among African American men, cancer mortality rates are 35% higher than white men
- ▣ Five-year survival rates for all cancer sites and at all stages is less than that for whites

BACKGROUND

- ❑ Positive family relationships historically helped African Americans survive adverse situations
- ❑ Perceived social stigma, physical activity restraints, and loss of employment is disruptive to family relationships likely resulting in social isolation and poorer quality of life
- ❑ Whether family relationships and social support are disrupted among African American men with a diagnosis of cancer is not known

PURPOSE

- ▣ Explore types of social support utilized by older African American men diagnosed with cancer.
- ▣ Explore relationships among family closeness, seeking social support and quality of life among older African American men with cancer.

METHODS

- Primary study
 - Helping Older African American Cancer Survivors Cope, PI Jill B. Hamilton, PhD, RN (R01 NR009271)
 - Descriptive correlational design
 - One goal of this study is to evaluate the effects of person and situation factors on coping strategies and whether these coping strategies influence health outcomes
 - Target population 350 older African American cancer survivors

SAMPLE (n=142)

Demographics (African American, n=142)	
Age	63 years (<i>SD</i> =7.4)
Type Cancer	
Prostate	25%
Lung	23%
Colon	13%
Head & Neck	13%
Other	22%
Time Since Diagnosis	2.5 years (<i>SD</i> =3.6)
Tumor Stage	
Stage 1	6%
Stage 2	10%
Stage 3	14%
Stage 4	25%
Income	56% Less than \$15,000
Education	75% High School or less
Marital Status	61% Not Married
Employment	88% Not Working
Number of people in household	75% Living with someone
Religious Affiliation	60% Baptist

MEASURES

- ▣ COPING
 - Ways of Helping (Hamilton, 2002)

- ▣ YOU, YOUR FAMILY, AND FRIENDS
 - Mutuality (Archbold & Stewart, 1993)

- ▣ QUALITY OF LIFE
 - SF-12 (Ware, Kosinski & Keller, 1996)

SEEKING SOCIAL SUPPORT

Types of Social Support Used (Mean Response/Standard Deviation)	
Others There For Me	3.29 (<i>SD</i> = .76)
Getting Physical Care Needs Met	3.06 (<i>SD</i> =1.26)
Helping Others	2.58 (<i>SD</i> =1.10)
Being Strong for Others	1.08 (<i>SD</i> =1.28)
Staying Connected to Others	2.53 (<i>SD</i> =1.11)

Correlations Among Social Support, Mutuality and QOL (n=142)

	Types of Social Support				
	Others there for me	Helping Others	Getting Physical Care Needs	Being Strong for Others	Staying connected to others
Mutuality	.42**	.33**	.23**	-.24**	.42**
Sf-12 Mental health	.23**	-.20*		-.28**	
Sf-12 Physical health	.19*				

*p<.05, **p<.01

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

- ▣ Highest mean responses to types of social support used were to scales:
 - ▣ Others There for Me
 - ▣ Getting Physical Care Needs Met
- ▣ Being Strong for Others is associated with distant relationships with family and friends
- ▣ Being Strong for Others and Helping Others are likely stressful rather than positive coping strategies

FUTURE DIRECTIONS

- ▣ Continue investigations into the social and cultural factors that contribute to positive health outcomes for older African American cancer survivors.
- ▣ Utilize data from these studies to inform policy makers and practitioners in the development and implementation of community-based programs.



“Cancer is a fight”

Thank you

Questions

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