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How can a new Multi-Modal Fatigue Management (MMFM) enhance the Quality of Life of Breast cancer survivors?

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Introduction

Breast cancer is the commonest cancer among females in Hong Kong. In 2015, 3900 new cases of female breast cancer were diagnosed. Among different symptomatic post treatment side effects, Cancer Related Fatigue (CRF) is one of the most common lingering symptoms after breast cancer treatment, affecting as many as 40% of survivors, and often hindering recovery. Evidences showed that breast cancer survivors can be benefit from group intervention on reducing fatigue and improving physical, psychological, and social well-being as well as quality of life (QOL). Hence, there are emerging needs for a newly developed multi-modal program focusing on fatigue management for breast cancer survivors in NTEC.

Objectives

To evaluate a new multi-modal fatigue management (MMFM) program for its impact on persistent fatigue, physical, psychological, and social well-being as well as QOL in breast cancer survivors.

Methodology

Breast cancer survivors with current follow up on lymphoedema management and ROM restrictions were recruited. Patients were randomly recruited to join control group or treatment group (MMFM) which contained 6 sessions of fatigue management and one boost up session after 2 months. MMFM was focusing on 1) active coping strategies; 2) body-mind activity (Health Qigong); 3) active life engagement for healthy lifestyle; 4) energy conservation; 5) stress management skills (relaxation techniques). A pre and post group assessment was done in the following aspects. 1. Fatigue status by VAS for Fatigue and FACIT- F 2. Functional and QOL- by FACT-B 3. Patient feedback by Satisfaction Questionnaire

Result

Results showed that participants in the intervention group showed significant

improvement in fatigue status. 56% of participants showed significant improvement in post treatment VAS for Fatigue score ($p < .05$). For the FACIT-F, there is 7% increment of total mean score after the group intervention reflecting reduction of fatigue level. Regarding the functional level and QOL, 6% positive change in FACT-B total mean score was noted. MMFM demonstrated positive outcomes on improving subscales of physical (3%), social (26%) and functional (30%) well-being. Not much effectiveness were shown in the subscales of emotional well-being. Conclusion The new multi-modal fatigue management (MMFM) program focusing on active coping strategies, life engagement and health Qigong has positive impacts on persistent fatigue, physical, psychological, and social well-being as well as QOL in breast cancer survivors.