

Public Abstract

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Title: THE EFFECTIVENESS OF AN INTERACTIVE THEATRE INTERVENTION ON IMPROVING PATIENT ADHERENCE TO SELF-MANAGEMENT REGIMENS FOR BREAST CANCER-RELATED LYMPHEDEMA

Introduction:

Of 3 million breast cancer survivors in the United States, from 41% to 94% may develop breast cancer-related lymphedema (BCRL) within 60 months of surgery, depending on the methods of assessment and criteria. A review of the literature reports average self-management rates between 40% and 50%, suggesting the need for more efficacious ways to educate breast cancer survivors about BCRL and improve adherence to self-management.

Objectives:

The objectives of this study are to (a) test a bundled interactive theatre (IT) intervention with aims to improve patient adherence to BCRL self-management regimens; and (b) determine the impact of IT on patient perceptions of self-efficacy and self-regulation in managing BCRL.

Methods:

Computer-generated randomization of sixty-two eligible breast cancer survivors with BCRL is being used to assign participants to a study group. The control group receives the standard of care which is printed information about BCRL, while the intervention group receives printed information and attends an IT performance. Pre- and post-intervention treatment diaries are used as measures of adherence and three valid and reliable questionnaires are used as measures of self-efficacy, self-regulation, and symptom management. Lymphedema status is documented with arm circumference and perometry measures.

Results:

The findings of this study demonstrated a positive trend for the intervention group in taking action to manage symptoms and improving perceptions of self-efficacy and self-regulation.

Implications for Practice:

This study lays the foundation for a proposed practice change that uses an interactive approach to improving adherence to BCRL self-management and empowering women who struggle with BCRL.