

SEXUAL QUALITY OF LIFE OF ADOLESCENTS AND YOUNG ADULT BREAST CANCER SURVIVORS

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BACKGROUND

With increasing survival rates of adolescents and young adults (AYAs) with breast cancer, health-related quality of life (HRQoL) becomes more important. An important aspect of HRQoL is sexual QoL. This study examined long-term sexual QoL of AYA breast cancer survivors, compared sexual QoL scores with that of other AYA cancer survivors, and identified factors associated with long-term sexual QoL of AYA breast cancer survivors.

MATERIAL AND METHODS

Data of the SURVAYA study were utilized for secondary analyses. Sexual QoL was assessed using the EORTC QLQ-SURV100. Descriptive statistics were used to describe sexual QoL of AYA cancer survivors. Linear regression models were constructed to examine the effect of cancer type on sexual QoL and to identify factors associated with sexual QoL.

Sexual QoL	Breast Cancer (N=944)	Other Cancer (N=3066)
Has sexual activity been enjoyable for you? (0-100)		
Mean (SD)	60.0 (31.3)	70.3 (30.8)
Median [Min, Max]	66.7 [0, 100]	66.7 [0, 100]
Missing (%)	273 (28.9%)	722 (23.5%)
Have you experienced a dry vagina during sexual activity? (0-100, women only)		
Mean (SD)	41.5 (39.7)	26.1 (34.1)
Median [Min, Max]	33.3 [0, 100]	0 [0, 100]
Missing (%)	298 (31.6%)	2033 (66.3%)
Sexual problems (symptom scale) (0-100)		
Mean (SD)	25.2 (30.2)	15.1 (25.7)
Median [Min, Max]	16.7 [0, 100]	0 [0, 100]
Missing (%)	121 (12.8%)	356 (11.6%)
Sexual functioning (functional scale) (0-100)		
Mean (SD)	34.5 (25.4)	46.1 (25.8)
Median [Min, Max]	33.3 [0, 100]	50.0 [0, 100]
Missing (%)	118 (12.5%)	359 (11.7%)
Sexual problems when sexually active (symptom scale) (0-100)		
Mean (SD)	33.3 (32.5)	16.6 (25.4)
Median [Min, Max]	33.3 [0, 100]	0 [0, 100]
Missing (%)	202 (21.4%)	530 (17.3%)

For functional scales, a higher score indicates greater QoL, for symptom-orientated scales a higher score indicates more severe symptoms.

RESULTS

Of the 4010 AYA cancer survivors, 944 had breast cancer.

Mean sexual QoL scores of AYA breast cancer survivors ranged from 34.5 to 60.0 for functional domains and from 25.2 to 41.5 for symptom-orientated domains.

AYA breast cancer survivors reported significantly lower sexual QoL compared to AYA survivors of other cancer types on all domains.

Age, time since diagnosis, relationship status, educational level, chemotherapy, hormonal therapy, breast surgery, body image, and coping were associated with sexual QoL of AYA breast cancer survivors.

CONCLUSION

AYA breast cancer survivors experience decreased sexual QoL in the long term (5-20 years) after diagnosis and score worse compared to AYA survivors of other cancer types, indicating a clear need to invest in supportive care interventions for those at risk, to enhance sexual well-being.

