

Emotional distress among long-term breast cancer survivors: The role of insomnia and worry (pp. 533-549)

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Breast cancer constitutes a challenge for survival and wellbeing. Emotional distress may persist many years after cancer being cured. This study aimed to analyse how emotional symptomatology was present in breast cancer survivors. Additionally, it aimed to study the role of sleep difficulty and worry on symptom maintenance. A sample of 206 women ($M= 56.07$ years, $SD= 11.56$) was selected to form four groups: healthy controls, breast cancer patients, short-term and long-term survivors. Emotional distress, worry and sleep problems were assessed. Long-term survivors showed significantly higher levels of anxiety ($p < .05$). Anxiety was predicted by worry for all groups but with higher variance in long-term survivors ($R^2_{adj} = .47$). Insomnia and age predicted depression in this group ($R^2_{adj} = .40$). To conclude, long-term emotional distress was observed even after the threat of cancer passed. Our findings confirm the need to extend supportive care to meet survivors' needs.