

Conducting Photovoice With Binational Cancer Survivors to Identify Health Behavior Change Intervention Preferences

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What Is the Purpose of this Study/Review?

- This aim of this study was to use a participatory research approach to work collaboratively with Mexican-origin breast cancer survivors to characterize knowledge, attitudes, and beliefs towards healthy lifestyle behaviors.
- To identify facilitators or barriers for meeting healthy lifestyle recommendations in cancer survivorship.
- To distinguish participation preferences for healthy lifestyle programming in Mexican-origin survivors of breast cancer living along the U.S./Mexico border.
- Results from this work provide the basis for a cultural adaptation of evidence-based lifestyle programs to support health behavior change in Mexican-origin survivors of cancer.

What Is the Problem?

- Little is known about the cancer survivorship experience or cancer preventive lifestyles of Mexican-origin survivors of cancer living along the U.S./Mexico border.
- Observed disparities in adherence to healthy lifestyle behaviors are influenced by poor access to health promotion interventions along the U.S./Mexico border region.
- Current lifestyle behavior interventions to improve cancer protective behaviors generally lack cultural relevance.

What Are the Findings?

- When discussing food, participants shared that it was unnecessary to follow restrictive diets for health. They noted how balanced eating and awareness when it comes to choosing foods can provide great benefits to everyone.
- Importantly, participants noted the connection between foods and emotion, describing how food is an important channel through which family and friend relationships are strengthened.
- Primary activity interests included leisure-time recreation that relieved anxiety related to their cancer diagnosis rather than regimented exercise routines.
- Participants considered it crucial to seek out and engage in social support to help others while navigating their own cancer survivorship experience.
- A lack of information and education regarding health behavior and its role in cancer survivorship served to motivate participants to share this information with survivors diagnosed after them.

Who Should Care Most?

- Survivors of cancer.
- Community health workers and other people concerned with meeting the needs of Mexican-origin survivors of cancer.
- Researchers interested in health promotion.

Recommendations for Action

- Key considerations for adapting evidence-based interventions for Mexican-origin survivors of cancer include incorporating traditional dietary preferences and patterns, physical activity which has a strong mind-body connection, and opportunities for social engagement.
- Future research should utilize community-based participatory methods to engage and empower participants.
- Universities should work closely with community organizations and train community health workers to conduct community-based participatory work.