Health-related Quality Of Life Change in Cancer Survivors Participating in a 12-week YMCA Exercise Program

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INTRODUCTION

Purpose: This study examined changes in QOL of cancer survivors participating in a 12-week LIVESTRONG® at the Y group-based exercise program. Methods: Twenty-five post-treatment cancer survivors (54.4 ± 11.1 yr., female = 88%, body mass index (BMI) = 28.2 ± 5.9) agreed to participate in this study as part of the 12-week LIVESTRONG® at the Y program. QOL assessments were administered at weeks 1, 6, and 12 using the 28-item Functional Assessment of Cancer Therapy-General (FACT-G) survey. Total FACT-G scores (0-108) were calculated by summing sub-scores from each section within the FACT-G assessment, employing the single imputation method of last observation carried forward for several missing data points at week 12. We examined differences in mean Total FACT-G score using a repeated measures ANCOVA, controlling for age, gender, smoking status, and BMI. Results: Total FACT-G scores were 83.8 ± 2.3, 88.6 ± 1.8, and 86.0 ± 2.5 at weeks 1, 6, and 12, respectively. Differences between mean Total FACT-G scores did not reach statistical significance (p > 0.05).

Discussion

Based on a total FACT-G scale of 0–108, the initial and subsequent QOL measures in this group of cancer survivors were all higher than published general population norms would predict.

We speculate the lack of significant QOL change observed in this study may have been due to the higher FACT-G scores noted thereby leaving less room for improvement.

Our research supports previous findings suggesting that, despite participation in a group-based exercise program, QOL may not significantly change for some cancer survivors.2

LIMITATIONS

Our sample included participants with a variety of cancer types and treatment experiences.

We lacked a control group with which to compare changes in QOL.

We investigated differences in mean raw FACT-G scores. Some evidence suggests that meaningful differences in QOL may not result in statistical significance when comparing raw mean scores.4

REFERENCES