

Exercise, Tea Consumption, and Depression Among Breast Cancer Survivors

Purpose: To examine the association of lifestyle factors and supplement use with depression among breast cancer survivors

Patients and Methods

In a population-based cohort study conducted between April 2002 and December 2006 in Shanghai, China, a total of 1,399 women who were diagnosed with stage 0 to III breast cancer completed 6-month and 18-month postdiagnosis, in-person interviews. Information on sociodemographic, clinical, and lifestyle factors were collected through the interviews and through review of medical charts at approximately 6 months postdiagnosis. A metabolic equivalent (MET) score was calculated from reported exercise activities. Quality of life (QOL) was evaluated by the Medical Outcomes Short Form-36 Health Survey at 6 months postdiagnosis. Depressive symptoms were measured by using a 20-item Center for Epidemiological Studies–Depression Scale at approximately 18 months postdiagnosis.

Results

Overall, 26% of women reported depressive symptoms and 13% met the criteria of clinical depression at 18 months postdiagnosis. Women with a higher exercise level (ie, ≥ 8.3 MET h/wk) were less likely to have depression than nonexercisers; the multivariate adjusted odds ratios (ORs) were 0.71 (95% CI, 0.47 to 1.07) for mild depression and 0.56 (95% CI, 0.35 to 0.88) for clinical depression in analyses controlled for sociodemographic and clinical factors and baseline QOL. Women who increased their exercise level had lower risk for depression. Regular tea consumption (ie, ≥ 100 g dried tea leaves/mo) was inversely associated with overall depression (OR, 0.39; 95% CI, 0.19 to 0.84). No associations were found for dietary intake or supplement use with depression.

Conclusion

Regular exercise participation and tea consumption may play an important role in the prevention of depression among breast cancer survivors.