

Evaluation of Diet Quality, Alcohol Intake, and Physical Activity in Cancer Survivors and the Association with Primary Source of Nutrition Advice

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Introduction

- **Purpose:** To examine cancer survivors' nutrition and physical activity compared to the recommendations by the American Cancer Society. The association between a survivor's primary source of nutrition advice and health characteristics were also assessed.
- **Rationale:** The American Cancer Society estimates there will be over 1.9 million new diagnoses of cancer cases in 2023 and over 609,000 cancer deaths. Among the contributing factors for cancer related death is excess body weight, excessive alcohol intake, poor diet, and physical inactivity. ACS has published guidelines that addresses these modifiable risk factors and what nutrition/physical activity parameters should be followed. Current research indicates that diet quality among American adult cancer survivors is frequently inadequate.
- **Research Questions:**
 - 1.) Are cancer survivors meeting key fruit and vegetable recommendations as outlined by the American Cancer Society?
 - 2.) Are cancer survivors meeting physical activity recommendations as outlined by the American Cancer Society? and
 - 3.) Is the primary source of nutrition advice of cancer survivors associated with their diet quality and health characteristics?

Design Elements

- Sample of 132 cancer survivors, recruited through social media and contacts within cancer care facilities.
- Participants completed self-administered online survey including demographic info.
- Dietary Screener Questionnaire determined average daily consumption of fruits and vegetables and weekly consumption of red and processed meat.

Results

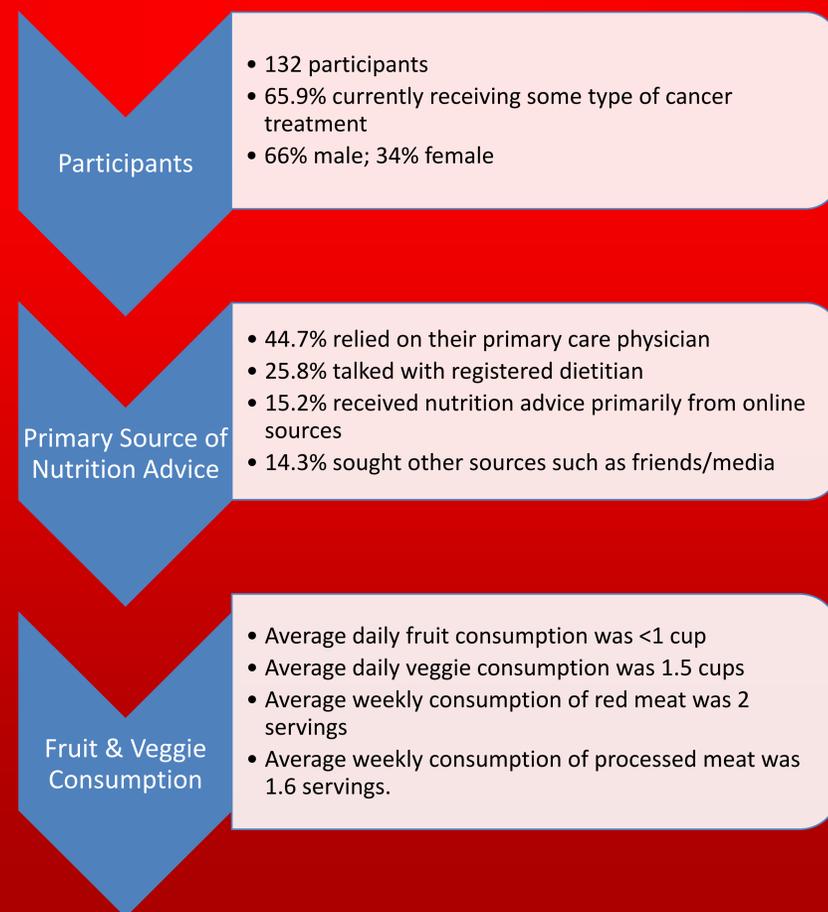


Table 4: Adherence to ACS Guidelines on Daily Fruit and Vegetable Consumption

	Primary Source of Nutrition Advice				Total
	PCP	Dietitian	Non-Medical		
Fruit					
Met recommendations	4	4	2	10	
Did not meet recs	55	30	37	122	
Vegetables					
Met recommendations	6	2	3	11	
Did not meet recs	53	32	36	121	
Total	59	34	39		

Note: Participants who reported 'Dietitian' as their primary source of nutrition advice had the highest percentage of adherence to fruit recommendations (11.76%). As for vegetable consumption, participants who reported 'PCP' as their primary source of nutrition advice had the highest percentage of adherence (10.17%).

Conclusion

There was not a statistically significant difference between primary source of nutrition advice and diet quality, BMI, alcohol intake, or physical activity. Cancer-related side-effects may make eating a diet of fruits and vegetables more difficult, and there may also be an emphasis on more calorie-dense foods. Registered dietitians, as food and nutrition experts, may play a key role in providing nutrition therapy to cancer survivors in order to increase their diet quality.