

Disparities in Distress for Patients with Cancer

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INTRODUCTION & BACKGROUND

- Nearly 2 million Americans diagnosed with cancer each year
- Distress has been shown to be an important predictor of outcomes and adherence in patients with cancer
- At our cancer center, in concordance with national recommendations, all patients are screened for distress
- Scores of 5 or above are considered positive screens
- Appropriate referrals to various services are then initiated

NCCN Guidelines Version 1.2022 Distress Management

NCCN DISTRESS THERMOMETER
 Distress is an unpleasant experience of a mental, physical, social, or spiritual nature. It can affect the way you think, feel, or act. Distress may make it harder to cope with having cancer, its symptoms, or its treatment.

Instructions: Please circle the number (0-10) that best describes how much distress you have been experiencing in the past week, including today.

Extreme distress: 10
 9
 8
 7
 6
 5
 4
 3
 2
 1
 No distress: 0

PROBLEM LIST
 Have you had concerns about any of the items below in the past week, including today? (Mark all that apply)

Physical Concerns	Practical Concerns
<input type="checkbox"/> Pain	<input type="checkbox"/> Taking care of myself
<input type="checkbox"/> Sleep	<input type="checkbox"/> Taking care of others
<input type="checkbox"/> Fatigue	<input type="checkbox"/> Work
<input type="checkbox"/> Tobacco use	<input type="checkbox"/> School
<input type="checkbox"/> Substance use	<input type="checkbox"/> Housing
<input type="checkbox"/> Memory or concentration	<input type="checkbox"/> Finances
<input type="checkbox"/> Sexual health	<input type="checkbox"/> Insurance
<input type="checkbox"/> Changes in eating	<input type="checkbox"/> Transportation
<input type="checkbox"/> Loss or change of physical abilities	<input type="checkbox"/> Child care
<input type="checkbox"/> Having enough food	<input type="checkbox"/> Access to medicine
<input type="checkbox"/> Worry or anxiety	<input type="checkbox"/> Treatment decisions
<input type="checkbox"/> Sadness or depression	<input type="checkbox"/> Sense of meaning or purpose
<input type="checkbox"/> Loss of interest or enjoyment	<input type="checkbox"/> Changes in faith or beliefs
<input type="checkbox"/> Grief or loss	<input type="checkbox"/> Death, dying or afterlife
<input type="checkbox"/> Fear	<input type="checkbox"/> Conflict between beliefs and cancer treatments
<input type="checkbox"/> Loneliness	<input type="checkbox"/> Relationship with the sacred
<input type="checkbox"/> Anger	<input type="checkbox"/> Ritual or dietary needs
<input type="checkbox"/> Changes in appearance	
<input type="checkbox"/> Feelings of worthlessness or being a burden	
Spiritual or Religious Concerns	
<input type="checkbox"/> Sense of meaning or purpose	
<input type="checkbox"/> Changes in faith or beliefs	
<input type="checkbox"/> Death, dying or afterlife	
<input type="checkbox"/> Conflict between beliefs and cancer treatments	
<input type="checkbox"/> Relationship with the sacred	
<input type="checkbox"/> Ritual or dietary needs	
Social Concerns	Other Concerns:
<input type="checkbox"/> Relationship with spouse or partner	
<input type="checkbox"/> Relationship with children	
<input type="checkbox"/> Relationship with family members	
<input type="checkbox"/> Relationship with friends or coworkers	
<input type="checkbox"/> Communication with health care team	
<input type="checkbox"/> Ability to have children	

Figure 1: NCCN Distress Thermometer

OBJECTIVE

- Evaluate the influence of demographic factors on distress in patients presenting to our cancer center

MATERIALS & METHODS

- Abstracted distress screenings from 2020 new patient encounters
- Kruskal-Wallis Test and post-hoc Wilcoxon Test with Benjamini-Hochberg correction

RESULTS

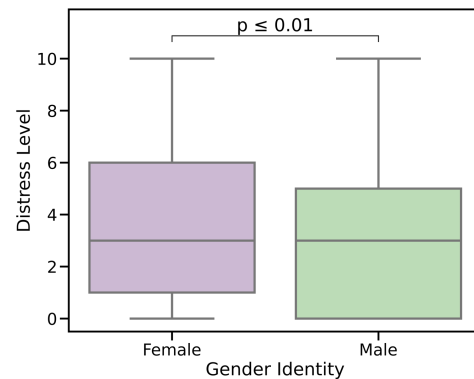
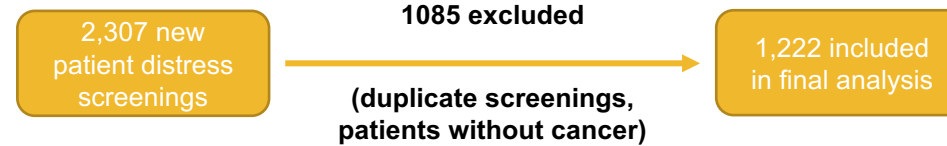


Figure 2: Distress levels by gender identity (KW p=0.001)

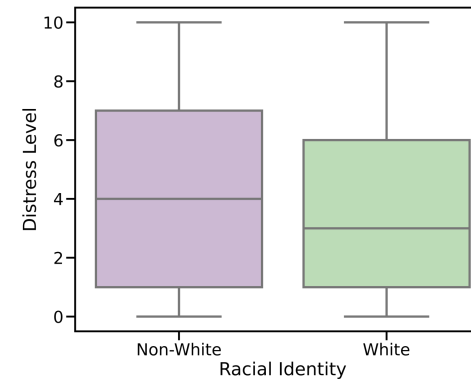


Figure 3: Distress levels by racial identity (KW p=0.064)

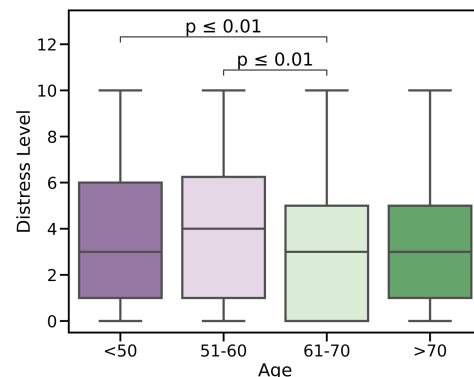


Figure 4: Distress levels by age (KW p<0.001)

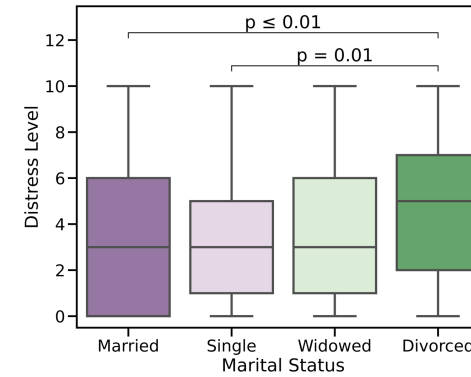


Figure 5: Distress levels by marital status (KW p=0.002)

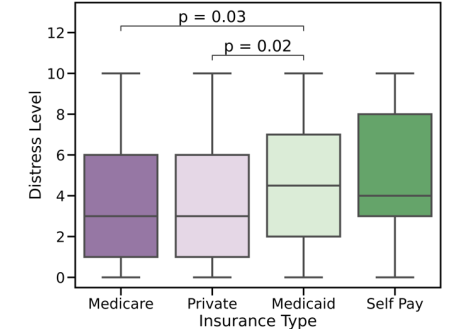


Figure 6: Distress levels by insurance type (KW p=0.009)

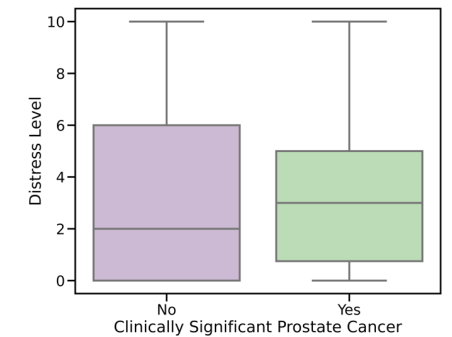


Figure 7: Subgroup analysis: distress levels in clinically significant prostate cancer (KW p=0.784; No = 31, Yes = 20)

CONCLUSIONS

- Several demographic factors impact distress in patients with cancer including marital status, insurance type, gender identity, and age
- In patients with prostate cancer, there is no statistically significant impact of disease risk on distress
- Further study will include other cancer types and consider relationship between disease risk and distress