

Web-based tool cuts cancer symptom distress

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(HealthDay)—A web-based, self-report assessment and educational intervention is beneficial for reducing symptom distress during cancer therapy, according to a study published online Dec. 16 in the *Journal of Clinical Oncology*.

Donna L. Berry, Ph.D., R.N., from the Dana-Farber Cancer Institute in Boston, and colleagues assessed a web-based self-report [intervention](#) in a trial involving 752 ambulatory adult participants who were randomized to symptom/quality of life (SxQOL) screening (control) or screening, targeted education, communication coaching, and the ability to track SxQOL over time (intervention). The assessment was used before a new therapeutic regimen, at three to six weeks and six to eight weeks later, and at the end of therapy. Self-reported data were delivered to clinicians at each time point.

The researchers found that from baseline to the end of the study there was a significant difference between the study groups in the mean change score on the Symptoms Distress Scale-15 (SDS-15) (1.27 in the control group [higher distress] versus -0.04 in the intervention group [lower distress]). There was an estimated 1.21 reduction in SDS-15 score in the [intervention group](#) ($P = 0.02$). Significant predictors included baseline SDS-15 score and clinical service. In multivariable analyses there was an interaction suggested between age and study group ($P = 0.06$); the benefit of intervention was strongest in those aged older than 50 years in subgroup analysis ($P = 0.002$).

"Web-based self-care support and communication coaching added to SxQOL screening reduced symptom distress in a multicenter sample of participants with various diagnoses during and after active cancer treatment," the authors write.

More information: [Abstract](#)
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