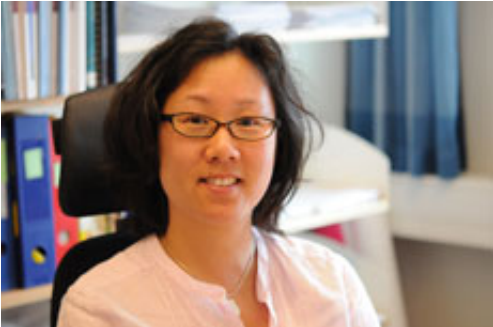


# Breast cancer patients in need of more psychological support

20 March 2014



This is a photo of Karin Stinesen Kollberg, University of Gothenburg. Credit: University of Gothenburg

For women who are suffering from breast cancer, concern for their children is the greatest source of worry. A researcher at The University of Gothenburg, Sweden, has shown this, and believes that women who are at the earliest stage of the treatment should be offered support by a psychologist or a social worker.

One out of every ten women in Sweden is affected by [breast cancer](#) at some time in her life. Despite this, the psychosocial support aspects of a breast cancer diagnosis are poorly researched, and there is today a lack of scientifically based knowledge about what psychosocial support interventions the affected women ask for.

Doctoral candidate Karin Stinesen Kollberg at The University of Gothenburg is engaged in research the purpose of which is to give women being treated for breast cancer a voice. In her dissertation she lets 313 women who have been diagnosed with breast cancer at The Sahlgrenska University Hospital describe their quality of life experiences and their need for support.

The dissertation shows that concern for their own [children](#) is the factor which most strongly affects their psychological well-being in the first year after

the diagnosis.

Those women who have children living at home expressed a greater need to speak about their concerns relating to their children in comparison with those without children at home. But that is something which their care does not always provide in their experience, Karin Stinesen Kollberg said.

Surgical and technical medicinal breast cancer care has developed dramatically and today breast cancer is treated with good success. But for the affected women what is involved is not only to survive, but also how they feel as survivors.

The treatment can cause side effects which impact the women's psychosocial health for a long time. When more and more women survive breast cancer, the quality of life also becomes a more important question, Karin Stinesen Kollberg said.

Karin Stinesen Kollberg hopes that her research will contribute to more effective rehabilitation. Specifically, the dissertation proposes that women, as soon as possible after diagnosis, be able to meet a psychologist or a [social worker](#), and that particular attention then be paid to mothers' concern for their own children but also to the worry which is associated with chemotherapy.

The dissertation also shows that many [women](#) in an early stage of the disease ask for counseling and better information on what it means to be treated with chemotherapy.

Provided by University of Gothenburg

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