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Effects of using online narrative and didactic information on healthcare participation for breast cancer patients

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Abstract

Objectives

To determine the effects of online narrative and didactic information on breast cancer patients' healthcare participation and the interaction effects of race.

Methods

Sample: 353 breast cancer patients (111 African Americans) using an eHealth program with narratives (audiovisual and text) and didactic information (text only). Measures: healthcare participation scale (0, 4 months), online information use. Analyses: hierarchical regression.

Results

Narrative ($I^2 = 0.123$, $p < 0.01$) and didactic ($I^2 = 0.104$, $p < 0.05$) information use had independent and positive effects on healthcare participation. Effects of both were significantly greater for African Americans.

Conclusions

Findings are consistent with and advance prior research on online learning processes and outcomes for breast cancer patients: (1) benefits accrue with using a variety of online learning tools; (2) African Americans use and benefit more from online narrative and didactic information than do Caucasians.

Practice implications

eHealth programs should provide both didactic and narrative information—especially for African Americans and might consider making greater use of interactive and audiovisual formats. As patients increasingly use of the web for cancer information, clinicians should provide lists of web high quality resources that provide both narrative and didactic information.



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Keywords

Breast cancer; Online patient education; Narrative information; Didactic information; Healthcare participation; African Americans

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