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### **Patient-Clinician Communication about Nutrition, Weight, Fitness, and Fatigue in Cancer Care**

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**Background:** Many cancer patients have concerns about nutrition, weight, fatigue, or fitness, but may have difficulty discussing these topics with their health care team (HCT). We examined associations between 1) patients' physical and psychosocial well-being and 2) comfort and confidence in talking to their HCT about nutrition and weight, changes in muscle tone and fitness, and fatigue (NWMTF).

**Methods:** 294 cancer survivors completed an online survey including demographics, clinical history, functional well-being (FACT-G subscale), depressive symptoms (CES-D), body image views (BIS), and rated (0=*not at all*; 4=*very much*) 9 statements about HCT communication confidence and comfort. We examined bivariate associations between demographics, treatment history, weight change, FACT-G, CES-D, BIS, and HCT communication. Variables associated with communication (FACT-G, CES-D, BIS) were entered into hierarchical multiple regression analyses, with level of comfort and confidence in HCT communication as dependent variables.

**Results:** Participants were 85% White; 78% female; mean age=58.7 (*SD*=11) years; 40% breast cancer, 24% blood cancer, mean time since diagnosis=5.9 (*SD*=5) years; 22% metastatic. 70% of participants reported speaking with their HCT about NWMTF concerns. 52% indicated they would discuss NWMTF concerns when fatigue and energy levels prevented usual activities, 47% when first noticing NWMTF, 17% when clothes did not fit. Greater functional well-being, lower depression, and better body image were associated with more comfort in discussing NWMTF concerns with the HCT (*rs* = -.22 to .16, *ps*<.01) and more confidence that the HCT understands and can help with NWFMT concerns (*rs* = -.32 to .25, *ps*<.01). Regression models confirmed that better body image—but not functional well-being or depression—was associated with greater comfort and confidence in HCT communication (semipartial *rs*=-.12, -.20; *ps*< .05, <.001 respectively).

**Conclusions:** Our findings suggest that patients' body image perception is related to comfort with talking to their HCT about weight and nutrition, changes in muscle tone and fitness, and fatigue, as well as confidence that their HCT understands and can help with these concerns.