

## BACKGROUND

Cancer patients and survivors experience distress related to physical, psychological, social, and financial concerns. Individuals diagnosed with triple negative breast cancer (TNBC) may be at increased risk of distress due to the aggressive nature of the illness and high rates of recurrence.

## AIMS

The aim of the present study was to describe how TNBC patients characterize cancer-related distress and concerns and identify factors associated with distress.

## METHODS

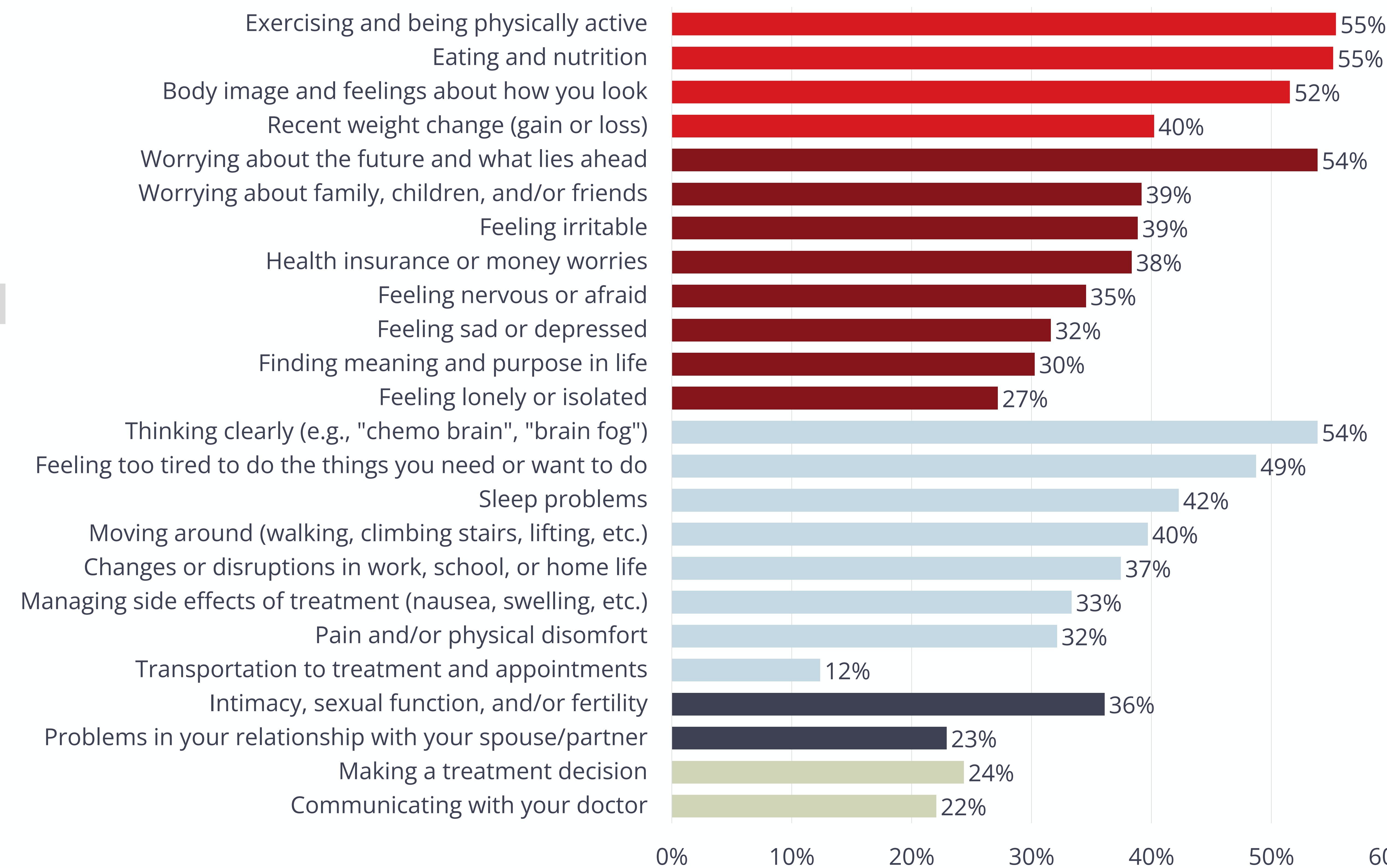
- Cancer Support Community's Cancer Experience Registry® (CER) is an online research program of surveys examining the physical, emotional, practical, and financial impact of cancer.
- From January 2015 to August 2021, a total of 195 U.S. residents with a history of TNBC took part in the CER and completed CancerSupportSource™ (CSS-25), a 25-item validated distress screening tool.
- CSS subscale scores were calculated as the average item rating (0=Not at all; 4=Very seriously) across five key domains:
  - Emotional well-being (8 items)
  - Symptom burden and impact (8 items)
  - Body image and healthy lifestyle (4 items)
  - Healthcare team communication (2 items)
  - Relationships and intimacy (2 items)

## PARTICIPANTS

<i>N</i> = 195 Individuals with TNBC	Mean/ <i>n</i>	SD/ %
Age (years) <i>n</i> = 189, range (28-77)	M=53.1	SD=10.3
Race & Ethnicity		
Non-Hispanic White	159	82%
Non-Hispanic Black	13	7%
Non-Hispanic other/Multiracial	13	7%
Hispanic	10	5%
Household Income		
<\$40,000	34	17%
\$40,000-\$59,999	24	12%
\$60,000-\$79,999	14	7%
\$80,000-\$99,999	25	13%
\$100,000 or above	57	29%
Employment Status		
Employed Full-Time	86	44%
Employed Part-Time	24	12%
Retired	35	18%
Unemployed due to disability or other reason	47	24%
Years Since Diagnosis <i>n</i> = 194, range (<1-29)	M=3.6	SD=4.6
<1 year	27	14%
1 to <2 years	53	27%
2 to <5	65	34%
≥5 years	49	25%
Currently receiving treatment	80	41%
Ever metastatic	52	27%

## RESULTS

### Top Concerns by CSS-25 Subscale: "Moderately" to "Very Seriously" Concerned



- Body image and healthy lifestyle
- Emotional well-being
- Symptom burden and impact
- Relationships and intimacy
- Healthcare team communication

Many individuals with TNBC reported concerns that were physical and future-oriented, highlighting critical areas of unmet need.

57% were concerned about cancer progressing or coming back (recurring).

### Multivariate Linear Regression Analysis

	Emotional Well-Being	Symptom Burden and Impact	Body Image and Healthy Lifestyle	Healthcare Team Communication	Relationships and Intimacy
Beta (standardized regression coefficient)					
Age, years	-0.139	-0.063	-0.197*	-0.030	-0.209*
Low income (<\$40K)	0.137	0.114	-0.062	0.108	-0.063
Unemployment	0.242*	0.284*	0.170*	0.083	0.272*
Years since diagnosis	-0.152*	-0.117	-0.062	-0.143	-0.053
Metastatic disease	0.091	0.186*	0.091	0.251*	0.087
Currently receiving treatment	0.082	0.057	-0.024	0.080	-0.007

\**p*<.05

- Younger age was associated with concerns about body image and healthy lifestyle and relationships.
- Unemployment was associated with higher distress of all types aside from healthcare team communication.
- Time since diagnosis was inversely associated with concerns about emotional well-being, such that distress was higher closer to diagnosis.
- TNBC patients with metastatic disease had significantly higher distress related to symptom burden and healthcare team communication.

## CONCLUSIONS AND IMPLICATIONS

- These data demonstrate that individuals with TNBC have persistent needs for psychosocial support and wellness programs.
- For TNBC patients, supportive services may be especially useful for younger cancer patients with metastatic disease and those who may be unemployed due to disability or other reasons.
- Psychosocial support should not only address emotional distress but also persisting concerns around cognitive function and fatigue.

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