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Georgia Southern Examines Physical Activity Levels of Older Cancer Survivors

December 9, 2016



Dr. Yelena Tarasenko leads a recent study to examine adherence to the American College of Sports Medicine and American Cancer Society guidelines on leisure-time aerobic and muscle-strengthening physical activity of older cancer survivors in the United States.

As part of the analyses, weighted percentages were calculated to describe sociodemographic and health-related characteristics of the study population. Unadjusted and adjusted predicted probabilities from generalized ordered and multinomial logistic regressions were estimated to examine levels of aerobic and muscle-strengthening physical activity in the study population.

Study results found cancer survivors and those without a cancer diagnosis had similarly low rates of adherence to physical activity guidelines according to age group (young-old, old-old, and middle-aged adults). In unadjusted analyses, the age effect was statistically significant in long-term cancer survivors only. Adjusting for sociodemographic and health-related characteristics, on average, 34.0% of young-old and 35.4% of old-old cancer survivors engaged in sufficient levels of aerobic physical activity, versus 44.3% of their middle-aged counterparts (P 's $< .05$). Approximately 10% of older cancer survivors met aerobic and muscle-strengthening guidelines, compared with 19.1% of middle-aged cancer survivors ($P = .001$).

In conclusion, adherence to the recommended levels of leisure-time aerobic and muscle-strengthening physical activity is lower in older than middle-aged cancer survivors in the United States. Greater efforts must be made to encourage and support physical activity participation in this population.

[“Self-Reported Physical Activity Levels of Older Cancer Survivors: Results from the 2014 National Health Interview Survey,”](#) was published in the Journal of American Geriatrics Society.

Dr. Yelena Tarasenko, Assistant Professor of Epidemiology at the Jiann-Ping Hsu College of Public Health, was the lead author and Dr. Chen Chen, DrPH Public Health Leadership alumni was one of the co-authors.