

## ***Opinion and practices of health professionals on physical activity promotion in cancer patients***

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### ***Background and purpose***

Literature suggests that health professionals (HPs) can play an important role in promoting physical activity (PA) in cancer patients (Jones et al., 2004). This study had three purposes: (1) analyzing HPs' knowledge and opinion about PA for cancer patients; (2) examining practices, barriers and roles that they identify when considering PA promotion in their patients; (3) determining factors that may enhance practices in this field.

### ***Methods***

This study comprised two phases. The first phase had a qualitative approach: 12 HPs participated in a semi-structured interview about their views and practices regarding PA promotion in cancer patients. The second phase used a quantitative approach: based on the findings of the analysis of the interviews and on the relevant literature, an online questionnaire was created, tested and sent to professional health organizations, hospitals and medical centers involved in oncology. A total of 68 HPs participated in the survey.

### ***Results***

In both phases of the study, HPs seemed to be aware of the benefits of PA for cancer patients and considered that they have to play a role in promoting PA in that specific population. However, only 25% (n=17) of HPs were familiar with the official PA guidelines. According to our results, HPs discuss the topic of PA with more than 7 out of 10 patients ( $7.11 \pm 2.61$ ). Lack of time and lack of knowledge about PA were identified as barriers to PA promotion and lack of knowledge was associated with a lower rate of interventions.

### ***Conclusions and implications***

Our findings suggest that improving HPs' knowledge about PA and how it can be proposed to cancer patients could help them to promote PA and to encourage their patients to consult a PA specialist. Such HPs' professional development should be considered as an interesting topic for sport pedagogy specialists.

### ***References***

Jones, L. W., Courneya, K. S., Fairey, A. S., & Mackey, J. R. (2004). Effects of an oncologist's recommendation to exercise on self-reported exercise behavior in newly diagnosed breast cancer survivors: a single-blind, randomized controlled trial. *Annals of Behavioral Medicine*, 28(2), 105-113. [https://doi.org/10.1207/s15324796abm2802\\_5](https://doi.org/10.1207/s15324796abm2802_5)

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