

December 2025 | ISSUE #50

Patient and Family Advisory Council

Cuthbert Lab & Oncology Outcomes

Welcome

As we wrap up a very busy fall season, our teams are looking forward to some well-deserved rest over the holiday closure. We also want to extend our sincere gratitude to all of you. Your active engagement, thoughtful insights, and steady participation have made this an incredibly meaningful year. We have several exciting projects already underway and more in development, and we look forward to sharing updates and hearing your feedback at our next meeting. This next meeting will be held on **Monday, February 2 from 4:00-5:30pm**, so please save the date! Wishing you a restful holiday season and a wonderful start to the new year.



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Research Highlights

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Pertuzumab and Trastuzumab Emtansine for Human Epidermal Growth Factor Receptor-2-Positive Metastatic Breast Cancer: Contemporary Population-Based Outcomes.

STUDY PURPOSE AND METHODS

Real-world outcomes are lacking for patients with HER2 positive MBC treated with:

- 1 Trastuzumab emtansine (TE) in any line of treatment.
- 2 Pertuzumab in combination with taxane chemotherapy, plus trastuzumab (TaxTP), in the first line setting.



- * Human epidermal growth factor receptor-2.
- * **HER2** Overexpression is associated with poor prognosis on metastatic breast cancer (MBC).

Examine real-world outcomes associated with new treatments for HER2-overexpressing MBC within a contemporary population-based cohort.

Main outcome variables:

- * Overall survival (OS).
- * Event-free survival (EFS).

RESULTS AND CONCLUSIONS

TaxTP cohort:



- * Trastuzumab naive patients had longer EFS than patients who received adjuvant trastuzumab.
- * Being trastuzumab naive was the only independent predictor of OS.

TE cohort:

- * EFS and OS were significantly longer in pertuzumab naive patients than in pertuzumab-exposed patients.
- * Being trastuzumab naive in the adjuvant setting was significantly associated with OS.

New anti-HER2 therapies appear to be clinically relevant for a contemporary cohort of patients with HER2-positive MBC.

These findings help inform resource planning for this under-researched population.



[Click here for full article.](#)

Cuthbert Lab

INFORMAL CANCER CAREGIVERS' PERCEPTIONS ON DYADIC EXERCISE WITH THEIR CARE RECIPIENTS

Thomas Christensen, Colleen Cuthbert, Melanie R Keats

Purpose & Methods

This study explored informal cancer caregivers' (ICCs) needs and preferences for exercise programs and explored their opinions about exercise and participating in a dyadic exercise intervention with their care recipient.

- Using an interpretive description approach, the researchers interviewed 8 caregivers, transcribed their stories, and analyzed them to uncover key themes.

Findings

3 major themes in the data described the ways in which ICCs were primed to participate in dyadic exercise programs to improve their health, yet were left wanting due to a lack of institutional support within cancer care:

1. No Time for Exercise
2. Lack of Oncology Care Team Support
3. Do It for Them

Each theme was characterized by opposing barriers and opportunities that shaped ICCs' ability to participate in dyadic exercise programs.

Conclusions

Overall, ICCs appeared ready and willing to engage in dyadic exercise programs with their care recipients; however, the opportunities and supports needed to do so remain limited. Oncology nurses may play a key role in promoting physical activity by referring their patients to exercise programs led by qualified exercise professionals.



Study #1

Study Recruitment



What is the study about?

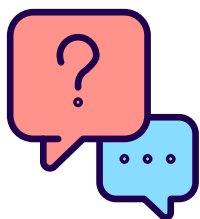
Head and neck cancer (HNC) treatment is often associated with physical and psychosocial burdens. Your participation will be used to understand the views of participants when it comes to difficulties involved on social isolation and loneliness during HNC treatment

What is involved?

Participate in an interview (**approximately 60 minutes**) to share your thoughts and views on social isolation and loneliness during cancer treatment

Who is eligible?

Individuals diagnosed with HNC as an adult and had completed treatment for at least 1 year



This study has received ethics approval from the Health Research Ethics Board of Alberta HREBA.CC-24-0468
Contact us at laisrenata.cezariosa@ucalgary.ca to join!



Study #2

Join Our Research Study!

Sociodemographic and Psychosocial Patient and Physician Factors in Oncology Treatment Decision-Making

What?

We want to understand how the background, experiences, and personal beliefs of patients and physicians affect the way they make treatment decisions together AND how these decisions impact patient's health. Share your experiences in a focus group with us!

Who?

- 18 years old or over
- Received a cancer diagnosis within the past 2 years
- Living in Alberta
- Referred to a medical oncologist for a chemotherapy assessment



Contact us at cacuthbe@ucalgary.ca

This study has received ethics approval from the Health Research Ethics Board of Alberta (HREBA.CC-25-0065). Contact HREBA at 780-423-5727. This poster was created in accordance with the HREBA.CC-25-0065-Patient ICF_V1 documented on February 10, 2025.



Coming Up



The next newsletter will release in January 2025.

The next PFAC meeting will be held on Monday, February 2, 2025.

Previous issues of the PFAC newsletter have been posted online:
<https://www.cuthbertlab.com/advisory-council>

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