

Surviving cancer Lymphoedema problems at rehabilitation: Need for physiotherapy

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INTRODUCTION

At Rehabilitation Centre Dallund (rcDallund) cancer survivors are offered a 6 days rehabilitation stay with several specialists including a physiotherapist. Many survivors, especially breast cancer survivors, worry about lymph oedema. We here present data that quantify the self reported lymph oedema among participants in 2004-2008 in a questionnaire and among participants who choose to consult a physiotherapist.

METHODS

The patients receive the Dallund Scale, which is a structured one page questionnaire qualified to disclose the patients' need of rehabilitation. The scale contains the possibility of checking 64 different complications (practical, work- or family related, psychological, physical or spiritual factors) including lymph oedema.

Dallund's physiotherapist systematically collects information on the most common questions and problems during the course.

RESULTS

At the conference data from the questionnaire and the physiotherapist will be presented. Most of the survivors that report lymph oedema had had breast cancer. Preliminary data suggest that some survivors, who not report lymph oedema in the questionnaire, talk with the physiotherapist about lymph oedema.

CONCLUSION

A lot of especially breast cancer survivors are concerned about lymph oedema after completion of treatment, therefore there is a need for physiotherapy: about daily living, physical activity, to talk about the concerns, to examine the survivors and to treat the lymph oedema, if present, several months after completion of cancer treatment.

KEYWORDS

Cancer, rehabilitation, lymphoedema, physiotherapy