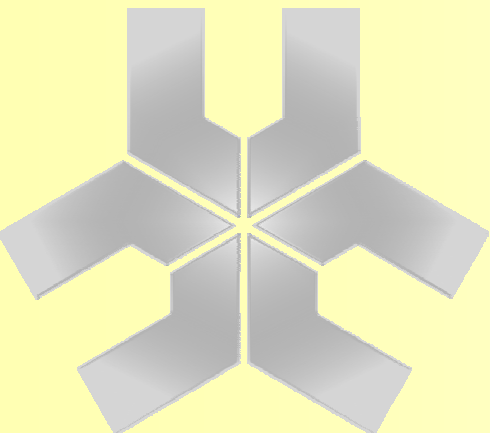


Breast cancer patients and oncologists' attitudes towards Internet delivered self-help

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Background

- Cancer is a widespread problem with scarce access to CBT
- CBT has been used to help “treated” breast cancer patients adjust to the psychological consequences
- Internet is a major source for information but quality is not satisfactory (Nilsson-Ihrfelt et al. 2004)

Internet treatment

- A few studies around
- Work by the Winzelberg group
- Owen et al. (2004) surveyed attitudes in association with a trial (age, outcome expectancy and barriers to Internet)
- Monnier et al. (2002) found that 70% were positive towards Internet service
- Berglund et al. (1997) found that psychological needs were a driving reason for participation in a trial

This study

- Investigate interest to receive Internet delivered self-help for breast cancer patients
- Investigate attitudes towards such program among oncologists

Participants

- Women 18-65 yrs (Regional Oncology Centre)
- No longer than 5 yrs. Treated for their condition
- Total N=3222 out of which 250 were randomized
- 180 responses, but 36 declined
- Response rate 58% (one reminder)

Sample description

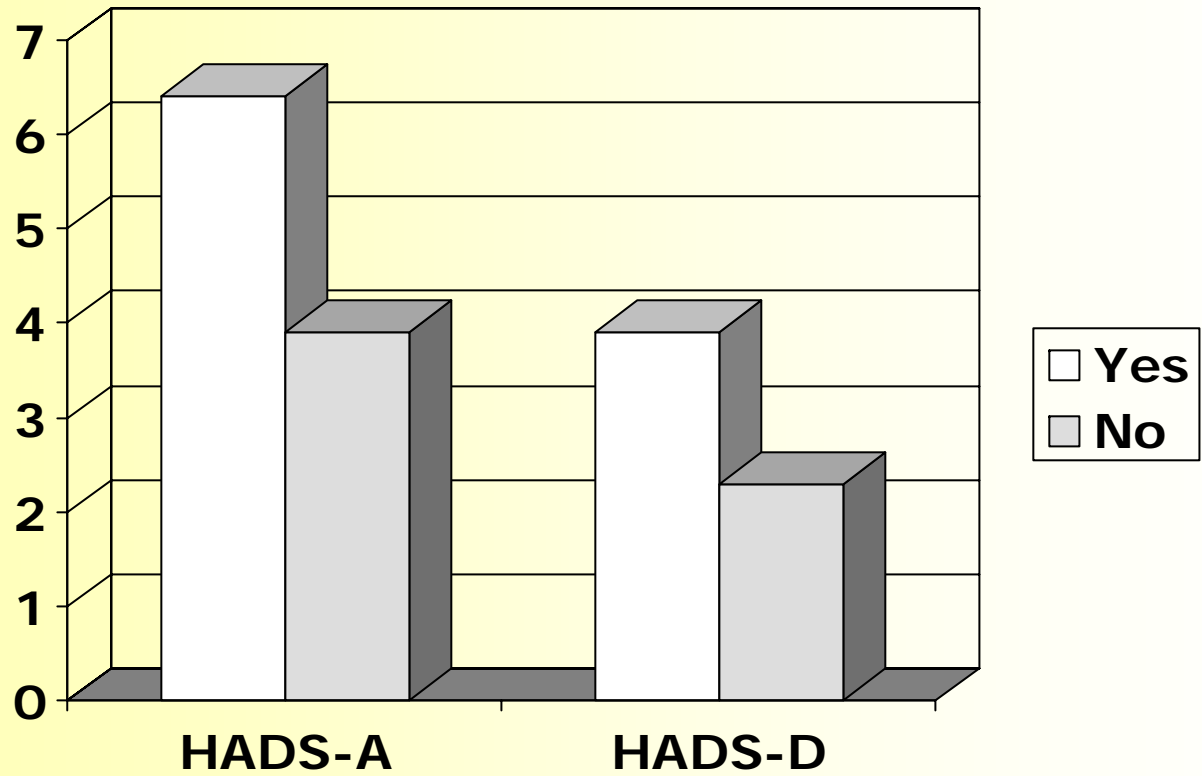
- Mean age 57 yrs
- 55% worked (at least 25%) and the average work time was 84%
- Average number of years of education was 12

Results

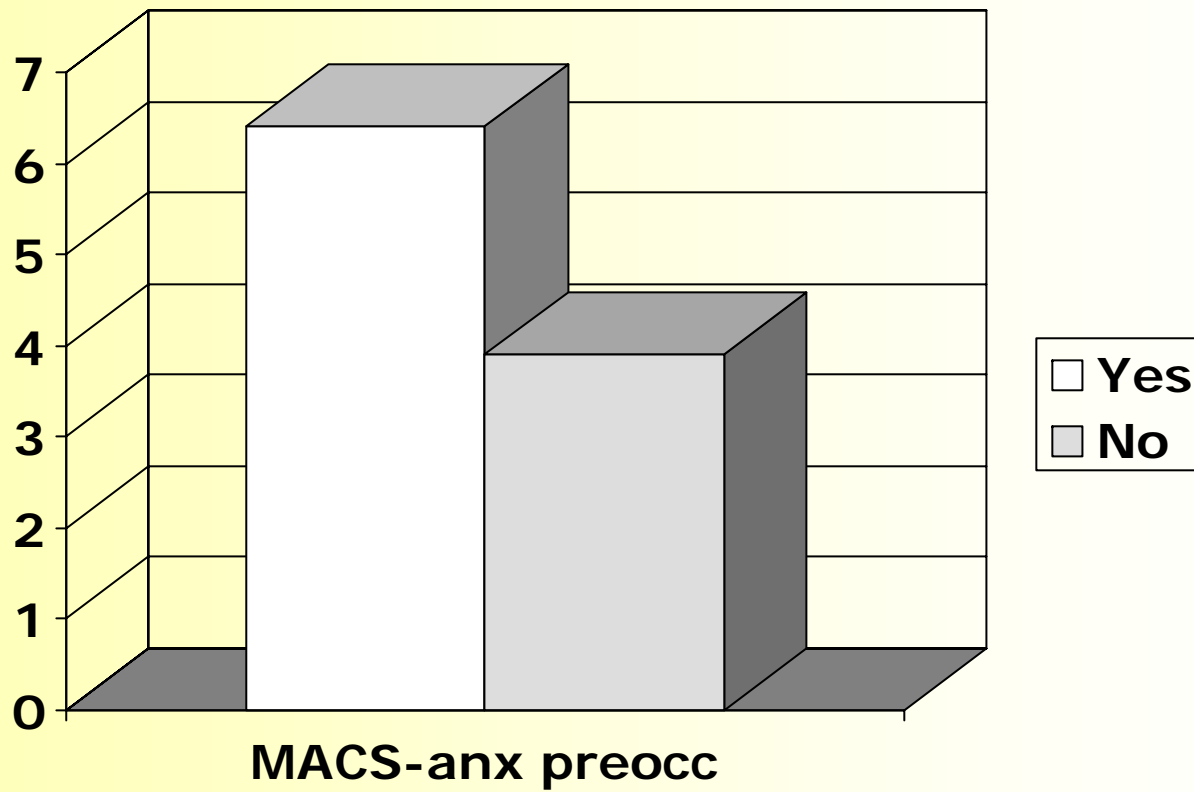
- Few had severe psychosocial problems, but many were less severe, approx $\frac{1}{4}$ had remaining problems
- About $\frac{1}{4}$ had used the internet to get more information
- 12% had participated in an online support group

Results II

- 2/3 responded that Internet based self-help was a good idea
- 3/10 diagnosis, 3/10 during medical treatment, and 4/10 following medical treatment
- 1/3 would participate today
- Those who would were more anxious (HADS), depressed (HADS) and had more anxious preoccupation on the Mental Adjustment to Cancer Scale



Differences between interested to participate today or not



Differences between interested to participate today or not

Oncologist sample

- 231 oncologist approached from the Oncologist association
- 135 responses, 9 declined
- Response rate 55%
- Shorter questionnaire
- 39% women
- 57% specialists in oncology
- Mean duration of practice 23 years

Results Oncologists

- A majority 98% believed patients had accessed information on the internet
- Most were unaware of the use of Internet for support among their patients (70%). The other 30% were certain that they did

More oncologist data

- 85% believed Internet treatment to be a good idea
- It would be best presented following medical treatment
- 75% would recommend Internet treatment

Conclusions

- Overall positive views by both patients and doctors
- More research on attitudes towards Internet treatment is needed
- An additional venue for research deals with Internet data collection (many persons still prefer paper and pencil tests)