

High-Risk, Early Breast Cancer: Survivorship Care

Breast cancer survivorship

A breast cancer survivor describes a person who is anywhere along the trajectory from breast cancer diagnosis throughout their life, including those living with cancer and those free of cancer^{1,2}

98.9%

Advances in detection and treatment options over the past decades have ushered in a new era of **survivorship** where patients have **significantly prolonged survival**.^{3,4} **The 5-year survival rate** after diagnosis with localized breast cancer is **98.9%**⁵

For patients with hormone receptor-positive early breast cancer (EBC), especially those at a high risk of recurrence, a **longer duration of therapy** is recommended, which means the potential for **longer-lasting side effects**⁶⁻⁸

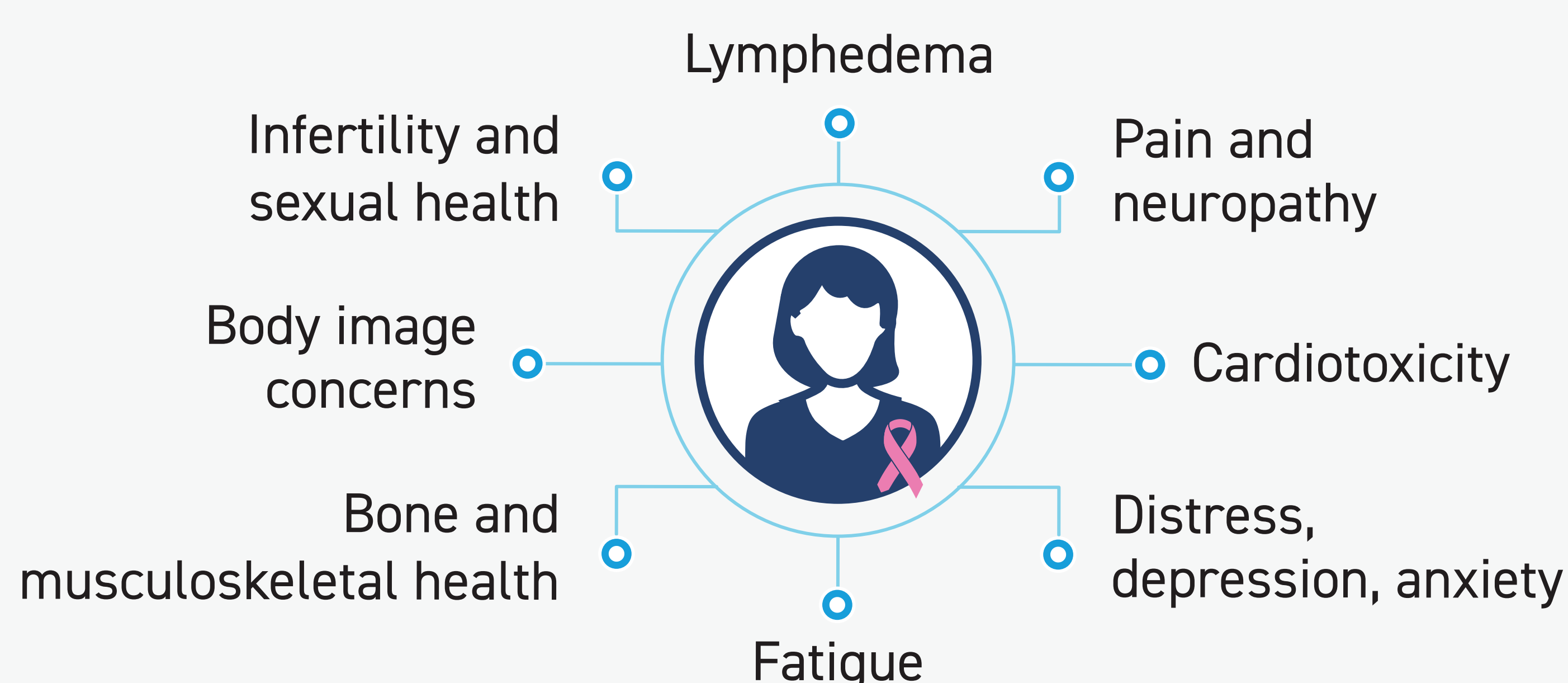
Hence, **it is critical for healthcare providers (HCPs) to address survivors' long-term needs** from the outset of care and throughout survivorship.^{1,9} To reduce disparities in survivorship care, the **diversity in patient populations and demographics** should be considered when caring for breast cancer survivors¹⁰



Impact of breast cancer on survivors' lives

Breast cancer impacts all aspects of patients' lives. Throughout the patient journey, the specific impacts of the disease and treatment may change¹¹

Long-term impacts of EBC and its treatment may include^{3,9}:



Fear of recurrence

In addition, fear of disease recurrence is **nearly universal** and is considered one of the most distressing consequences of breast cancer¹²

Fear of recurrence is especially common in younger women¹³

Although fear improves over time for most young women, approximately **1 in 3 experience severe fear that does not improve or may even worsen**¹⁴

Recommendations for survivorship care

Clinical practice guideline recommendations were developed by the American Cancer Society and American Society of Clinical Oncology based on a systematic review of the medical literature⁹:

<h3>Care coordination⁹</h3> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use a survivorship care plan <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Keep a record of the disease and treatment history, and provide recommendations for follow-up care Ensure communication between primary care provider and oncology team Include caregivers, spouses or partners in survivorship care 	<h3>Management of long-term effects^{4,9,15,16}</h3> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Offer interventions that can reduce side effects and improve quality of life, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cold caps to reduce alopecia Mindfulness-based stress reduction Aerobic exercise to alleviate fatigue/sleep disturbance Provide referral for psychological interventions to ease fear of recurrence 	<h3>Surveillance for recurrence^{9,17,18}</h3> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Utilize individualized surveillance approach based on age, specific diagnosis, and treatment Provide regular history and physical examinations Offer annual mammography for patients with unilateral mastectomy or lumpectomies Refrain from offering routine lab tests or imaging in asymptomatic patients unless patient meets high-risk criteria for increased surveillance Educate on signs/symptoms of recurrence Assess risk and offer genetic counseling Counsel on endocrine therapy adherence 	<h3>Health promotion⁹</h3> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assess information needs and provide resources Counsel on importance of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Healthy weight Physical activity Nutrition Smoking cessation
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The impact of breast cancer on survivors' lives is profound and far-reaching. HCPs may support survivors of breast cancer by providing individualized information, counseling, interventions, and disease surveillance throughout their journey

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