

Survival is the priority; side effects can be "Tolerated": Symptom management experience and guided self-help intervention needs of breast cancer women treated with ovarian function suppression.

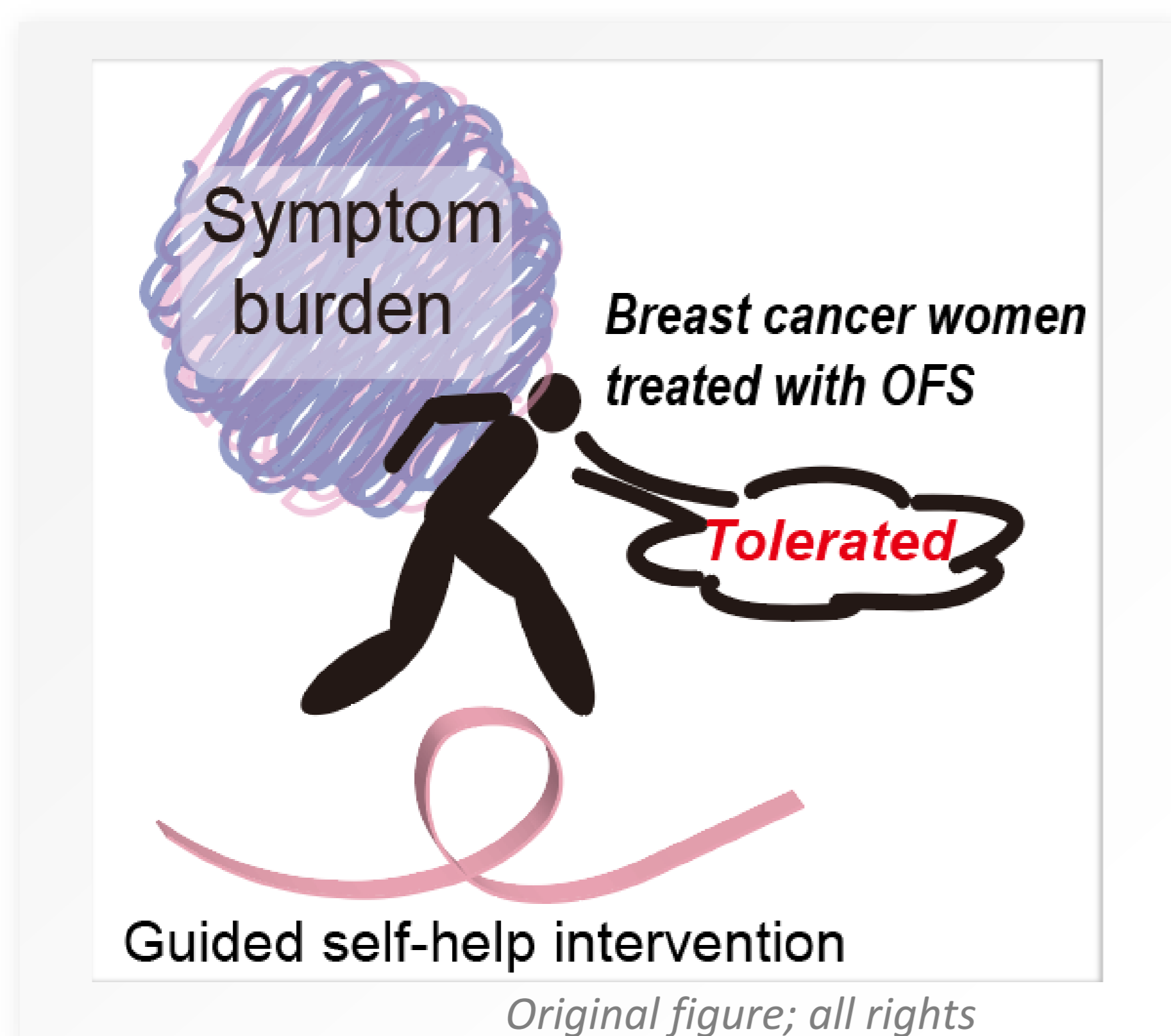
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INTRODUCTION & AIM

- Ovarian function suppression (OFS) treatment improves survival outcomes for premenopausal breast cancer patients, but it also maintains their estrogen at postmenopausal levels for five years.
- In the face of survival, patients are forced to accept the physical-mental challenges brought on by long-term side effects.



- Guided self-help intervention (GSH) is an effective booster for self-management in chronic disease courses, but related research is relatively limited.
- We aim to explore OFS patients' experiences, cognitions regarding symptom burden management, and their needs, attitudes, and preferences for GSH.

METHOD

- Descriptive phenomenological research methods were used to conduct in-depth semi-structured interviews with 18 OFS breast cancer patients.
- Thematic analysis was conducted using NVivo version 12 for data management and analysis.

RESULTS & DISCUSSION

- Patients indicated that when facing survival, age-inappropriate side effects are tolerable.
- Patients consider self-management of OFS treatment-related side effects to be crucial, and they obtain information support through multiple channels.
- There are fewer sources of information about OFS treatment side effects compared to other treatments, and patients often lack systematic knowledge and professional support, which causes them to easily become anxious about any discomfort during the prolonged treatment period.
- Patients strongly desire professional guidance, which can avoid unnecessary panic caused by information asymmetry.
- Patients can accept GSH in any form and at any dose. Intervening with GSH before treatment begins can maximize the reduction of patients' fear of the "unknown."
- GSH utilizing m-Health, personalization, gradual progression, and positive energy are welcomed elements.

CONCLUSION

- OFS breast cancer patients lack knowledge of symptom management, long-term forced menopause, the pressure of young and middle-aged people in society who cannot escape, and mixed information on the Internet all make them helpless.
- They have a very strong need for symptom-GSH.