

Energize:mBC is a Web-based Program to Treat Fatigue in Metastatic Breast Cancer Patients



Energize:mBC is a personalized, self-paced, web-based program to help women with metastatic breast cancer and moderate to severe fatigue increase their energy and quality of life. Patients also work with counselors. Fatigue in people with cancer is typically caused by treatment or the cancer itself. In a randomized trial of breast cancer patients, Energize resulted in improvements in fatigue in 83% of patients compared to 31% of controls. The magnitude of improvements in fatigue due to Energize were twice as large as exercise interventions and three times as large as psychosocial interventions, with 90% of patients completing the program within six months. Energize may also work with other types of fatigue as there are data suggesting the program works in Multiple Sclerosis and Chronic Fatigue Syndrome.

COMMERCIAL OPPORTUNITY

- Fatigue is one of the most common and disabling symptoms reported by cancer patients. To date treatment options for cancer-related fatigue have been extremely limited. Providers often order bloodwork to rule out anemia and recommend exercise. However, exercise does not address the multifactorial causes of cancer-related fatigue. Patients often cope with fatigue in ways that help in the short term but worsen fatigue in the long run. For example, patients may nap during the day, which can cause sleep problems at night and greater fatigue the next day.
- Competition for Energize is extremely limited. Although exercise and psychosocial interventions have been developed to address cancer-related fatigue, most are not available outside the context of a research study. Studies of pharmaceutical agents such as sertraline, modafinil, and armodafinil have indicated no benefit for cancer-related fatigue. Thus, Energize effectively fills a pressing clinical need for a large number of cancer patients.
- As the population ages and new treatments have become available, the number of cancer survivors has increased from 3.6 million in the US in 1975 to 15.5 million in 2016, and is expected to further increase. Cancer survivors often experience long-term effects of cancer and its treatment, of which fatigue is one of the most common and disabling. Moderate to severe fatigue occurs in up to 60% of cancer patients during treatment and in nearly 30% following treatment completion.

TECHNOLOGY

Energize:mBC helps women with metastatic breast cancer cope with and think about fatigue differently. The program consists of five core modules focused on: 1) introducing the program, 2) improving sleep habits, 3) modulating activity, 4) thinking differently about fatigue, and 5) reviewing and maintaining progress. Additional modules are added as needed, including: 6) basics of metastatic breast cancer, 7) fear of cancer progression, 8) medication adherence, and 9) improving social support. Modules consist of educational information provided by text, videos, patient testimonials, and diagrams. Patients work with counselors via text messaging and video conferencing to set goals, evaluate their progress, and receive support as they progress through the program. The program is intended to be completed within six months and requires on average about four hours of counselor time per patient.

PUBLICATION/PATENT

- Energize:mBC is protected by Copyright

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