



Chronic illness, stress, and mental health

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Living with a chronic illness is stressful.

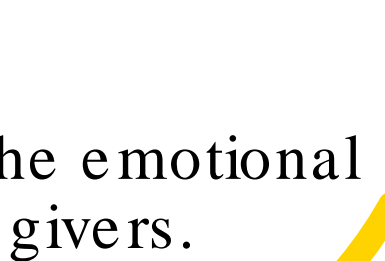
Family members and intimate partner stress.

Stress can stem from primary and secondary sources.

Stress can have deleterious effects on one's health and well-being.



LGBTQ+ Individuals Living with Cancer

- Approximately 450,000 to 1,000,000 LGBTQIA+ individuals live with a cancer diagnosis.
 - Specific risk factors that increase the cancer risk have been identified in the literature.
 - Minority stress
 - Negative coping strategies
 - Approximately 25% of individuals living with cancer have persistent psychological distress, including depression and anxiety.
 - A cancer diagnosis can also affect the emotional health of patients, families, and caregivers.
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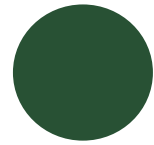


Relatively little is known about daily stress and the mental health of older LGBTQIA+ adults living with cancer and their care partners.



The dynamic nature of mental health

The onset, severity, and progression of psychopathology can vary within and between individuals.



Contextual triggers can cause shifts from mild symptom experience to clinically significant psychopathology.

Shifts in symptom experience can be detected via early warning signals.

Wichers, M. (2014). "The dynamic nature of depression: a new micro-level perspective of mental disorder that meets current challenges." *Psychol Med* 44(7): 1349-1360.

Helmich, M. A., et al. (2021). "Early warning signals and critical transitions in psychopathology: challenges and recommendations." *Curr Opin Psychol* 41: 51-58.



Study Purpose

The purpose of this study is to examine the daily experiences of older LGBTQIA+ adults living with cancer and their care partners to characterize daily stress and mental health profiles over a three-month period



Study Aims

Aim 1: To examine associations between stressors, stress moderators, and daily depression and anxiety-related symptoms.

Aim 2: To examine associations between depression and anxiety symptom over time, resilience, and quality of life.



Eligibility Criteria

Participants eligible to participate in the study include:

- LGBTQIA+ adults aged 40+ living with a cancer diagnosis
- Care Partners, aged 21+, of an LGBTQIA+ adult living with a cancer diagnosis



Who

We are recruiting locally and nationally:

- 40 LGBTQIA+ Adults Living with a Cancer Diagnosis
- 40 Care Partners of an LGBTQIA+ Adult Living with a Cancer Diagnosis

When

Participants will be asked to complete:

- A baseline survey upon enrollment followed by 14 daily surveys
- A three-month follow-up survey followed by a second set of daily surveys

What

We will ask participants about their:

- Daily and Enduring Stressors
- Coping Strategies
- Available Social Support
- Physical and Mental Health

Where/How

Participants will complete all surveys online:

- Short daily surveys sent at 7 pm each day
- Surveys will be sent to the participant's preferred email address



Stress Measures

Cancer-related stress

- Memorial Symptom Assessment Scale (MSAS)
- Memorial Symptom Assessment Scale – Short Form (The MSAS-SF)

Non-cancer related stress

- Perceived Stress Scale (PSS)
- Daily Inventory of Stressful Experiences (DISE)

Minority stress

- Daily Heterosexual Experiences Questionnaire (DHEQ)
- Everyday Discrimination Scale



Study Impact

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The results of this study will help:

- Address disparities in mental health risks among LGBTQIA+ cancer survivors and their care partners.
- Identify assets and promotive resources that increase resilience to stress.
- Inform best practices that support the unique needs older LGBTQIA+ adults.

The proposed work will serve as the first step towards a dynamic mental health framework to inform support interventions for LGBTQIA+ adults living with cancer and their partners.

Steps for Recruitment

- Initial contact with organization
- Screen participant in Qualtrics
- If eligible – input info in red cap
- Email correspondence for the rest of the study



Barriers

- Low recruitment numbers
- Age requirement
- Bots and Frauds

& Solutions

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- Trying a vast array of avenues to recruit
- Lowered the age with permission of Dr. Puga and the IRB
- Re-did our Qualtrics link and screen potential participants through “scamalytics” also screen phone numbers

Tips

- Listen to understand not listen to respond
- Offer to share other organizations advocacy projects or flyers
- Know your audience's health literacy (know when to use lay-terms)
- Assure privacy with organizations and participants
- Have patience with participants
- Be kind

Flyer with QR Code

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HELP US UNDERSTAND THE EXPERIENCES OF LGBTQIA+ INDIVIDUALS LIVING WITH CANCER AND THEIR CARE PARTNERS



FULLY ONLINE STUDY WITH COMPENSATION

Are you and your
care partner eligible?

LGBTQIA+ ADULTS LIVING
WITH CANCER:

- 40+ years old
- Diagnosed with Cancer

CARE PARTNERS:

- 21+ years old
- Self Identifies as a care partner to an LGBTQIA+ adult diagnosed with cancer

You Will Be Asked
to Complete:

- Two 25-minute Surveys for
- 5-7-minute daily surveys for 2 weeks
- Three month follow up survey

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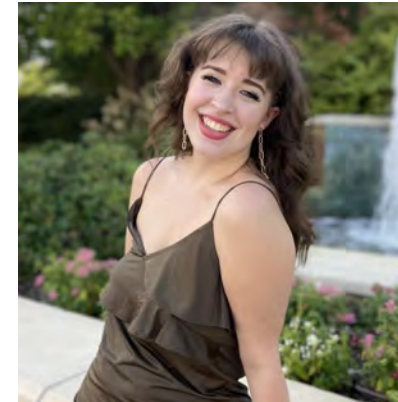
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Thank you!

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