

Purpose: Little is known about the psychological wellbeing and social barriers among immigrant Chinese American breast cancer survivors. The aim of the present study was to explore the social needs and challenges of Chinese American immigrant breast cancer survivors. Methods: This study used the expressive writing approach to explore the experiences among 27 Chinese American breast cancer survivors. The participants were recruited through community-based organizations in Southern California, most of whom were diagnosed at Stages I and II (33% and 48% respectively). All the participants had been living in the USA for at least 5 years (on average 19 years). Participants were asked to write three 20-minute essays related to their experience with breast cancer (in 3 weeks). Participants' writings were coded with line-by-line analysis, and categories and themes were generated. Results: Emotion suppression, self-stigma, and perceived stigma about being a breast cancer survivor were reflected in the writings. Interpersonally, participants indicated their reluctance to disclose cancer diagnosis to family and friends and concerns about fulfilling multiple roles. Some of them also mentioned communication problems with their husbands. Related to life in the USA, participants felt unfamiliar with the health insurance and health care system, and they encountered language barriers. Conclusions: Counseling services addressing concerns about stigma and communication among family members may benefit patients' adjustments. Tailor-made information in Chinese about diagnosis and treatment for breast cancer and health insurance in the USA, may also help patients go through the course of recovery.