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**Tailoring cancer education and support programs for low-income, primarily African American cancer survivors.**

Martin MY, Pollack LA, Evans MB, Smith JL, Kratt P, Prayor-Patterson H, Watson CD, Dignan M, Cheney LC, Pisu M, Liwo A, Hullett S.

Department of Medicine, University of Alabama at Birmingham. mymartin@uab.edu

**Abstract**

**PURPOSE/OBJECTIVES:** to identify the information and stress-management topics of most interest to low-income, predominantly African American cancer survivors.

**RESEARCH APPROACH:** descriptive, cross sectional.

**SETTING:** outpatient oncology clinic in a public hospital in Birmingham, Alabama.

**PARTICIPANTS:** 25 patients with cancer; 12 were men, 22 were African Americans, and 16 had a 12th-grade education or less.

**METHODOLOGIC APPROACH:** patients ranked potential topics to be included in an educational curriculum.

**MAIN RESEARCH VARIABLES:** quantitative rankings of information and stress-management priorities.

**FINDINGS:** learning about cancer, understanding cancer treatments, relieving cancer pain, and keeping well in mind and body were the most highly ranked topics among those offered within the American Cancer Society's I Can Cope curriculum, which also included supportive topics such as mobilizing social support. The preferred stress-management topics were humor therapy, music therapy, meditation, and relaxation; lower-ranked topics included **pet therapy** and art as therapy.

**CONCLUSIONS:** cancer survivors appear most interested in topics specific to their illness and treatment versus supportive topics. Stress management also received high rankings.

**INTERPRETATION:** nurses have a key role in providing patient education and support. Tailoring education programs may better target specific needs and improve the quality of cancer care of underserved patients.

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**Publication Types, MeSH Terms, Grant Support**

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