

# Impact of COVID-19 on Breast Cancer Survivors: A Scoping Review

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## Introduction

- The COVID-19 pandemic has affected how cancer care is delivered globally. The effect on breast cancer survivors' (BCS) quality of life (QoL) and the service model has been under observed.

## Objective

- To evaluate the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on BCS.

## Method

- Following PRISMA guidelines. Embase, MEDLINE, CINAHL, and Web of Science were searched from January 2020 to February 2024.
- Primary studies in English that specifically commented on the impact of COVID-19 on BCS QoL, the care model, follow-up care, imaging and diagnostics, and cancer recurrence were included.

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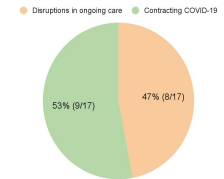
## Conclusion

- COVID-19 has *negatively impacted* the QoL and the care delivery of BCS.
- Virtual follow-up and interventions were well-received by BCS and should be *recommended* as an alternative to in-person care.

## Results

- 33 Studies met the inclusion criteria.
- **Impact on QoL:** 13 studies reported that the psychological well-being of BCS during the pandemic was worse than pre-pandemic. BCS reported more stress, depression, anxiety, and loneliness compared to pre-pandemic levels. Common stressors include:

Common Stressors amongst BCS during COVID-19 reported by 17 studies



- **Impact on follow-up care:** Eleven studies, including two prospective cohort studies, reported reduction in in-person follow-ups.
- **Impact on Imaging/Diagnostics:** 11 studies reported post treatment surveillance imaging were delayed during the pandemic.
- **Impact on Care Model:** Reduction in treatment and follow-up resources, leading to high number of unmet needs in BCS.
- Virtual health interventions were shown to be effective in alleviating stress and improving overall fitness in eight studies.