Eliminating Digestive Irregularities Caused by Late Effects: A Pilot Study of an Innovative Culinary Nutrition Intervention for Reducing Gastrointestinal Toxicity in Gynecologic Cancer Patients Who Have Undergone Pelvic Radiotherapy

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BACKGROUND

- Pelvic radiotherapy (RT) improves survival in gynecologic cancer patients but often results in gastrointestinal (GI) toxicity, affecting quality of life.
- Standard nutrition guidance lacks specificity for these survivors, complicating dietary choices.
- To address this gap, the EDIBLE intervention was developed to offer structured dietary self-management skills to alleviate RT-induced GI toxicity.

METHODS

Implementation: We conducted a single-arm mixed-methods pilot of the EDIBLE intervention among post-treatment gynecologic cancer survivors to assess its feasibility, acceptability, and preliminary effects on GI symptoms, knowledge, and self-efficacy.

Intervention: The program was composed of three pillars: nutrition education, culinary skill-building, and reinforcement and support

Data Collection: Outcome measures were administered at baseline (T1), immediately post-intervention (T2), and again 3 months later (T3). Qualitative interviews were conducted at T3.

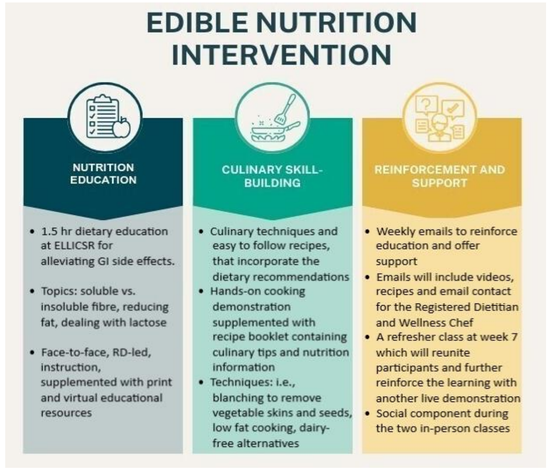

Figure 1. Three pillars of the EDIBLE program

RESULTS

Patient Uptake: 115/388 consented (32%);61 attended the class. 53/61 completed (T1), 38 completed (T2), 26 completed (T3)

- Statistically significant improvements were observed at the three-month mark (T3), such as enhanced confidence in culinary practices, increased knowledge and skills with regard to managing GI side effects, and improvements in bowel and GI symptoms.

DISCUSSION

The results suggest EDIBLE is acceptable, improving GI symptoms and self-efficacy; however, moderate recruitment rates indicate refinement is needed. A randomized control trial and cost-effectiveness analysis is needed to confirm effectiveness and scalability.

AUTHORS & REFERENCES

Pritlove, C.; Capone, G.; Ramasamy, M.; Avery, L.; Fierini, D.; Ferguson, S.E.; Han, K.; Jones, J.M. Eliminating Digestive Irregularities Caused by Late Effects: A Pilot Study of an Innovative Culinary Nutrition Intervention for Reducing Gastrointestinal Toxicity in Gynecologic Cancer Patients Who Have Undergone Pelvic Radiotherapy. *Nutrients* **2024**, *16*, 4227 https://doi.org/10.3390/nu16234227