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Prediction of evening fatigue severity in outpatients receiving chemotherapy: less may be more

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Abstract

Background—Fatigue is the most common and debilitating symptom experienced by oncology patients undergoing chemotherapy. Little is known about patient characteristics that predict changes in fatigue severity over time.

Purpose—To predict the severity of evening fatigue in the week following the administration of chemotherapy using machine learning approaches.

Methods—Outpatients with breast, gastrointestinal, gynecological, or lung cancer ($N=1217$) completed questionnaires one week prior to and one week following administration of chemotherapy. Evening fatigue was measured with the Lee Fatigue Scale (LFS). Separate prediction models for evening fatigue severity were created using clinical, symptom, and psychosocial adjustment characteristics and either evening fatigue scores or individual fatigue item scores. Prediction models were created using two regression and three machine learning approaches.

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Disclosure of interest

The authors report no conflict of interest.

Results—Random forest (RF) models provided the best fit across all models. For the RF model using individual LFS item scores, two of the 13 individual LFS items (i.e., “worn out”, “exhausted”) were the strongest predictors.

Conclusion—This study is the first to use machine learning techniques to predict evening fatigue severity in the week following chemotherapy from fatigue scores obtained in the week prior to chemotherapy. Our findings suggest that the language used to assess clinical fatigue in oncology patients is important and that two simple questions may be used to predict evening fatigue severity.

Keywords

fatigue; cancer; chemotherapy; symptoms; patient-reported outcomes; machine learning; predictive model

Introduction

For the past 40 years,[1] cancer-related fatigue (CRF), a symptom that occurs in 14% to 96% of patients undergoing chemotherapy,[2,3] has been the subject of intense investigation. However, despite the high prevalence rate and negative impact of CRF on patients,[4–11] limited progress has been made on its treatment for a number of reasons. First, no universally accepted definition of CRF is available to guide research and clinical practice. One of the most commonly used definitions is that of the National Comprehensive Cancer Network (NCCN) which defines fatigue as “a distressing persistent subjective sense of physical, emotional, and/or cognitive tiredness or exhaustion related to cancer or cancer treatment that is not proportional to recent activity and interferes with usual functioning”. [12]

Second, progress in fatigue assessment is challenging given the heterogeneity of CRF instruments.[13] In a 2019 systematic review of unidimensional and multidimensional scales to assess CRF,[13] 25 different instruments were evaluated. The number of items on these instruments ranged from 4 to 72, but validity and/or reliability information was missing for many of them. The authors concluded that the development of a “universally-defined tool kit for the assessment of CRF may help to clarify the concept of fatigue and promote a systematic approach to fatigue measurement”. [13]

Another important consideration in CRF assessment is the growing body of evidence suggesting that diurnal variations in fatigue severity are associated with different modifiable risk factors. For instance, evening fatigue severity is associated with higher levels of stress, [11] lower functional status, and higher levels of sleep disturbance and depression.[14] Recent work by our research team[14–17] and others[18–20] found that fatigue severity is highly variable over the course of a day and among individuals. More generally, the impact of CRF on patients is significant in terms of inability to tolerate treatments, lost productivity, lost days from work, and decreased quality of life.[4–8]

Regarding the management of CRF, the lack of a risk prediction model is another gap in our progress toward more effective management.[21–25] An accurate risk prediction model

could assist clinicians in identifying high risk patients and provide them with recommendations for activity modifying or non-pharmacologic interventions to prevent or reduce CRF.[26–28] Compared to traditional regression models, various machine learning (ML) approaches have the potential to improve the accuracy of prediction models. [29] Much of the research on risk modelling of symptom severity using ML approaches has focused on psychiatric symptoms.[30–34] Recently, we used ML techniques to predict the severity of depression, anxiety, and sleep disturbance in the week following the administration of chemotherapy.[35] This study demonstrated the potential of ML models to identify high risk patients, educate them about their symptom experience, and improve the timing of preventive and personalized symptom management interventions.

Only one CRF study has used supervised classification by filter methods and recursive feature elimination to identify and validate a specific gene cluster that predicted the risk for higher versus lower levels of fatigue in 44 patients with prostate cancer who underwent radiation therapy.[36] We found no studies that used ML approaches to predict CRF severity in patients undergoing chemotherapy. Given the complex nature of CRF, relatively large sample sizes may be needed to evaluate a larger number of predictors using ML methods. The goal of this study was to predict the severity of evening fatigue in the week following chemotherapy in a large and well-characterized sample of oncology outpatients. We hypothesized that a prediction model of evening fatigue severity that used ML approaches would provide improved predictive performance over traditional approaches.

Methods

This analysis is part of a larger longitudinal study that evaluated symptom clusters in oncology patients receiving chemotherapy. Details of this study are described elsewhere.[37]

Patients and settings

Inclusion criteria were as follows: patients were ≥ 18 years of age; had one of four cancer diagnoses (i.e., breast, gastrointestinal, gynecological, lung); had received at least one cycle of chemotherapy; would receive at least two additional cycles of chemotherapy; and were able to complete the study questionnaires in English. Recruitment occurred at two Comprehensive Cancer Centers, a Veterans Affairs hospital, and four community oncology programs. Eligible patients were approached by a research staff member in the infusion unit during their first or second cycle of chemotherapy to discuss study participation (Figure 1). Of the 2234 patients approached, 1343 agreed to participate and provided written informed consent. The most common reason for study refusal was generally feeling too overwhelmed with their cancer experience. The study was approved by the Committee on Human Research at the University of California, San Francisco and by the Institutional Review Board at each of the study sites.

Instruments

The complete list of predictors used in the analyses is provided in Supplemental File 1. Patients completed a demographics questionnaire and these validated measures: Alcohol Use Disorders Identification Test (AUDIT),[38] Karnofsky Performance Status (KPS) scale,[39]

Self-Administered Comorbidity Questionnaire (SCQ),[40] a smoking questionnaire,[41] 28-item Brief COPE scale,[42] NEO-Five Factor Inventory,[13] Spielberger State-Trait Anxiety Inventories (STAI-S and STAI-T),[43] Center for Epidemiological Studies-Depression (CES-D) scale,[44] General Sleep Disturbance Scale (GSDS),[45] Attentional Function Index (AFI),[46] a modified version of the Memorial Symptom Assessment Scale (MSAS), [47] Perceived Stress Scale (PSS),[48] Impact of Event Scale–Revised (IES-R),[49] Herth Hope Index (HHI),[50] and Conner-Davidson Resilience Scale (CD-RISC).[51] Medical records were reviewed for disease and treatment information.

Toxicity of each patient's chemotherapy regimen was rated using the MAX2 index. A MAX2 score is the average of the most frequent grade 4 hematologic toxicity and the most frequent grade 3 to 4 nonhematologic toxicity that correlates well with overall risk of severe toxicity for that regimen.[52–54] The emetogenicity of the chemotherapy regimens and types of antiemetic regimens were categorized using established clinical guidelines.[55] Eighteen laboratory values were included.

To assess evening fatigue severity in the week before (Time Point One, TP₁) and the week after (Time Point Two, TP₂) administration of chemotherapy, patients completed the 18-item LFS at each time point. The items are divided into a 13-item Fatigue Scale and a 5-item Energy Scale.[56] Each item was answered with a 0 to 10 numeric rating (Table 1). Total fatigue and energy scores were represented by the mean scores of each scale.[57,58] Higher scores indicate greater fatigue severity and higher levels of energy. Patients rated each item based on how they felt within 30 minutes of awakening (i.e., morning fatigue, morning energy) and prior to going to bed (i.e., evening fatigue, evening energy). The LFS has established cut-off scores for clinically meaningful levels of fatigue (i.e., 3.2 for morning fatigue, 5.6 for evening fatigue)[6] and energy (i.e., 6.2 for morning energy, 3.5 for evening energy).[6] The predictor variable(s) of evening fatigue at TP₁ were quantified using either the LFS total score ($F1_{Total}$) or the score for each of the 13 LFS scale items ($F1_{Item}$). The outcome variable of evening fatigue at TP₂ was quantified using the LFS total score ($F2_{Total}$).

Data processing

Data from TP₁ were used to develop models to predict evening fatigue at TP₂ (Figure 2). An overview of our data processing and analysis approach is shown in Figure 3. We performed all analyses using R (version 3.6.2).[59] Data were collected from oncology patients at TP₁ (N=1343) and TP₂ (N=1217). Merging the two time points resulted in a dataset of 1217 patients which included 158 demographic and clinical predictor variables. After evaluating for missingness, 9 variables were excluded that had >15% missing values after observing a gap in the distribution of missingness around this number. The final dataset of potential predictors, using the LFS total score for evening fatigue at TP₁, included 145 variables (n=60 categorical, n=85 continuous). The final dataset using the 13 individual LFS scale items for evening fatigue at TP₁ included 157 predictor variables (n=60 categorical, n=97 continuous). Missing values were imputed using the k-nearest neighbors method [60,61] from the DataMiningWithR (DMwR) R package (version 0.4.1, <http://www.dcc.fc.up.pt/~ltorgo/DataMiningWithR>). A missing predictor variable was imputed by the weighted

average of that variable among the five nearest neighbors determined by Euclidean distance. Each weight was $\exp(-\text{dist}(x,j))$, where $\text{dist}(x,j)$ was the Euclidean distance between the case with missing predictor variable (x) and the neighbor (j). The continuous and categorical variables were imputed separately.

Prediction of Evening Fatigue in the Week Following Chemotherapy

In addition to traditional multivariable linear regression, three different supervised learning algorithms[62] were used to predict evening fatigue in the week following chemotherapy (TP₂). We applied two ensemble learning methods: (1) RPART [63] that implements the classification and regression trees (CART) method[63] using the rpart package in R (version 4.1–15, <https://CRAN.R-project.org/package=rpart>) and (2) RF[64] from the Random Forest package in R (version 4.6–14).[65] A third learning method, SVM, is a nonparametric, supervised, and kernel-based method that was implemented (<http://www.csie.ntu.edu.tw/~cjlin/libsvm>) using the kernlab package in R (version 0.9.29).[66]

Within the general models built using these algorithms, these parameter combinations were used: (1) linear regression with and without filtering, where filtering meant including only the variables with p-values of <0.05 from univariable fits.[67] The one-standard error rule was applied to choose the best model in RPART; (2) For RF, we varied the number of variables randomly sampled as candidates at each split in RF (i.e., mtry parameter), trying three values, $p/2$, $p/3$, and $p/4$, where p is the number of predictor variables. These values were 73, 48 and 36 when using $F1_{\text{Total}}$; and 79, 52 and 39 when using $F1_{\text{Item}}$; and (3) A polynomial kernel with SVM, varying the degree of the polynomial (1 to 3). Finally, we fit a null model that is the average of the $F2_{\text{Total}}$ values from the training set. It is the prediction of $F2_{\text{Total}}$ without any other variables in the model.

To avoid bias in prediction error estimates, models were fit in a cross-validated manner utilizing 10-fold cross validation to ensure that the same data that were used to fit a model were not used in its prediction.[68,69] To avoid the impact of a particular split in cross-validation, the cross-validation process was repeated 1000 times. The performance of each method was evaluated as the difference between the measured and predicted value at sampled points. For every round of cross-validation, the error in prediction was evaluated as the root mean square error (RMSE)[70] between the observed $F2_{\text{Total}}$ and the estimated $F2_{\text{Total}}$ from our model. To rank methods, the RMSEs (mRMSE) were averaged for each method across the 1000 repetitions of cross-validation.

Individual predictor variables in the multivariable models were ranked by assigning a variable importance score to each of them. The variable importance score estimated the contribution of each variable to the model as implemented in the Caret R package.[71] The importance scores were scaled to be between 0 and 100 for each method. Supplemental files are available from the figshare repository (<http://figshare.com>) and identified by the Digital Object Identifier (<https://doi.org/10.6084/m9.figshare.13150955>).

Results

Patient characteristics

The sample (Table 2) was predominantly white, female, middle aged, and college-educated. Most were unemployed and not married. While patients' mean evening fatigue score at TP₁ was below the clinical cut-off, it increased to the cutoff level at TP₂.

Model evaluation and selection

Prediction of evening fatigue severity at TP₂ with F1_{Total}.—Using F1_{Total} to predict evening fatigue severity at TP₂, the best performing RF model was $mtry = p/2$ (p = number of predictor variables); the best SVM model was a first degree polynomial; and the better linear model was filtered rather than unfiltered (Supplemental File 2). Across the final models, the RF method provided the best fit (mRMSE 1.53 (bootstrap CI 1.52–1.54); (Table 3, Figure 2, Supplemental Figure 1). All of the models predicted a mean F2_{Total} (range: 5.61 to 5.65, Table 3) similar to the patient-reported mean of 5.62.

Of the estimated contribution of each of the top variables to the RF model (i.e., variable importance scores; Supplemental File 3) to predict evening fatigue severity at TP₂ (Table 4), F1_{Total} was the most important predictor by a large margin. The next most important predictors were the GSDS excessive daytime sleepiness score, morning LFS total score, and evening Lee Energy Scale (LES) total score. As illustrated in the scatter plots of the most important predictors using RF (Supplemental Figure 2), F2_{Total} was highly correlated with F1_{Total} and less so with the next eight most important predictors.

Prediction of evening fatigue severity at TP₂ using F1_{Item}.—As the total score on the Evening LFS was the most important predictor, we evaluated models that used each of 13 LFS items as individual predictors (i.e., F1_{Item}) utilizing the same methods and characteristics but replacing F1_{Total} with F1_{Item} for evening fatigue. The best performing RF model was with $mtry = p/4$; the best SVM model was a third degree polynomial; and the better LM model was filtered rather than unfiltered (Supplemental File 4). Across the final models, we found that the RF method provided the best fit (mRMSE 1.53; bootstrap CI 1.52–1.54; Figure 2). All models predicted a mean F2_{Total} of 5.61 to 5.69 similar to the patient-reported mean F2_{Total} of 5.62 (Table 5). Of the 13 individual items in the evening LFS at time 1, the top two predictors in importance were the LFS scale items “worn out” and “exhausted” (Table 4, Supplemental Figure 4).

The RF method generated the best fitting models for both predictor datasets. Little difference in performance was found between the two RF models. The next-highest three predictors other than F1_{Total} or F1_{Item} in both of the RF models were the mean scores for excessive daytime sleepiness subscale of the GSDS, evening energy, and morning fatigue total severity. None of our models performed well in predicting extreme values of F2_{Total} (Supplemental Figures 1 and 3).

Discussion

To our knowledge, this is the first study to use ML techniques to accurately predict the severity of evening fatigue during the week following administration of chemotherapy using total and individual item scores from the LFS obtained prior to the patients' second or third cycle of chemotherapy. In addition, this study is the first to evaluate the relative contributions of a diverse set of demographic, clinical, symptom, and psychological adjustment characteristics to predict evening fatigue severity in a large sample of oncology patients.

Use of single items to predict evening fatigue

Consistent with our *a priori* hypothesis, the RF model improved our ability to predict the severity of evening fatigue.[35] An important clinical finding is the ability of the RF model using single item scores from the evening LFS pre-chemotherapy to predict evening fatigue severity post-chemotherapy as accurately as the model using total evening LFS scores. Specifically, this finding suggests that clinicians can ask patients to rate (0–10) their level of feeling “worn out” or “exhausted” prior to chemotherapy to estimate their evening fatigue in the week following chemotherapy. The use of these most predictive single items may facilitate the assessment of evening fatigue in a busy oncology clinic, particularly in the absence of a patient symptom diary or smart electronic device.

Additional evidence regarding the clinical relevance of the “worn out” or “exhausted” items comes from several studies that used Rasch analyses to evaluate the psychometric properties of individual items on the LFS.[72–74] These studies evaluated patients with a variety of diagnoses (i.e., cancer,[72] HIV/AIDS,[73] stroke,[74] and osteoarthritis[74]) from the United States[72,73] and Norway[74]). Similar to our findings, these reports noted that a single fatigue item could be used to assess fatigue in the clinic [74]. That said, care should be taken to address cultural adaptation and linguistic validation to ensure conceptual equivalence across translations.[75,76]

Efforts are being made across the oncology community to integrate reliable, valid, and easy-to-use patient-reported outcome measures into routine clinical care.[77,78] In the NCCN guideline,[12] the recommendation is to screen for fatigue using a 0 (no fatigue) to 10 (worst fatigue you can imagine) rating. Our findings suggest that the word “fatigue” is less predictive than the more descriptive terms, “worn out” or “exhausted”. In another instrument, the PROMIS Fatigue Item Bank, 95 items evaluate patients' fatigue experience and fatigue interference with daily life and function rated on a 1 (never) to 5 (always) Likert scale. It can be administered as either a computer adaptive test or as fixed-length short forms with a variable number of items.[79] While one question includes “exhausted” (i.e., How exhausted were you on average?), “worn out” is not used. Finally, the PRO-CTCAE is the newest fatigue measure that was designed to capture symptomatic adverse events directly from patients who are participating in clinical trials.[80,81] The measure has two fatigue items that are rated using a 7 day recall period on the dimensions of severity and interference. However, “worn out” and “exhausted” are not used. While these three self-report measures for fatigue are valid and reliable, they illustrate the lack of consensus that surrounds the assessment of fatigue.

Predictors of evening fatigue

Consistent with previous research, we found that mean scores for evening energy, morning fatigue, and excessive daytime sleepiness were the three top non-evening fatigue items of most importance across the two models. Morning fatigue as an important predictor of evening fatigue in our study is consistent with previous research indicating that morning and evening fatigue are distinct but related symptoms.[14–20,82–84] In addition, the current analysis confirmed that lower evening energy pre-chemotherapy is associated with increased fatigue following chemotherapy [85,86] and that energy is a distinct symptom.[87–90] While fatigue is associated with higher levels of sleep disturbance in oncology patients,[91–93] it is interesting to note that the excessive daytime sleepiness subscale score of the GSDS had higher importance in both models. Excessive daytime sleepiness is associated with increased napping and disruptions in the sleep-wake cycle which may lead to increases in evening fatigue.[94–96]

Limitations

While our final models performed well, predictions of low and high extremes of evening fatigue at TP₂ were less reliable due to insufficient data. Our attempts to fit more complex models to evaluate these extreme ranges (i.e., univariate and multivariate spline models with knots) did not improve predictive performance (data not shown). Because patients had already received one or two cycles of chemotherapy, further validation of our findings could be evaluated in patients prior to the initiation of chemotherapy. In addition, utilizing genomic data as potential predictors might improve the models and inform underlying biological mechanisms. Future prospective studies might be informative that either confirm or refute our findings in other patient samples such as patients undergoing surgery, radiation therapy, and other targeted therapies.

Conclusions

This study is the first to use ML methods to accurately predict evening fatigue severity following chemotherapy, with the strongest predictor being patient self-report of specific fatigue-related words, which could potentially become an important aspect of improving evaluation for precision health care.[97] Although the translational aspects of ML models are challenging[98], our findings suggest that the language used to assess fatigue is important. Specifically, oncology clinicians can ask patients two simple questions focused on the words ‘exhaustion’ and ‘worn-out’ to better predict patients’ evening fatigue severity across cycles of chemotherapy. Future research is needed to confirm these findings, perhaps in conjunction with additional phenotypic and molecular characteristics that may be used in predictive models of morning and evening fatigue.

Supplementary Material

Refer to Web version on PubMed Central for supplementary material.

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Data availability statement

Data are available from the authors upon reasonable request.

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Abbreviations

AFI	Attentional Function Index
AUDIT	Alcohol Use Disorders Identification Test
CART	Classification and regression trees
CES-D	Center for Epidemiological Studies-Depression

CD-RISC	Conner-Davidson Resilience Scale
COPE	Coping Orientation to Problems Experienced
CRF	Cancer related fatigue
F1_{Total}	Evening LFS at TP ₁ total score
F1_{Item}	Evening LFS at TP ₁ scale items
F2_{Total}	Evening LFS at TP ₂ total score
GSDS	General Sleep Disturbance Scale
HHI	Herth Hope Index
IES-R	Impact of Event Scale–Revised
KPS	Karnofsky Performance Status
LFS	Lee Fatigue Scale
mRMSE	Mean RMSE
MSAS	Memorial Symptom Assessment Scale
ML	Machine learning
NRS	Numerical rating scale
NCCN	National Comprehensive Cancer Network
PRO	Patient-reported outcome
PRO-CTCAE	Patient-Reported Outcomes Version of the Common Terminology Criteria for Adverse Events
PROMIS	Patient-Reported Outcomes Measurement Information System
PSS	Perceived Stress Scale
RF	Random forest
RPART	Recursive partitioning and regression trees
RMSE	Root mean square error
SCQ	Self-Administered Comorbidity Questionnaire
SD	Standard deviation
SI	Scale Items
STAI	Spielberger State-Trait Anxiety Inventory
SVM	Support vector machine

TP₁	Time Point 1
TP₂	Time Point 2

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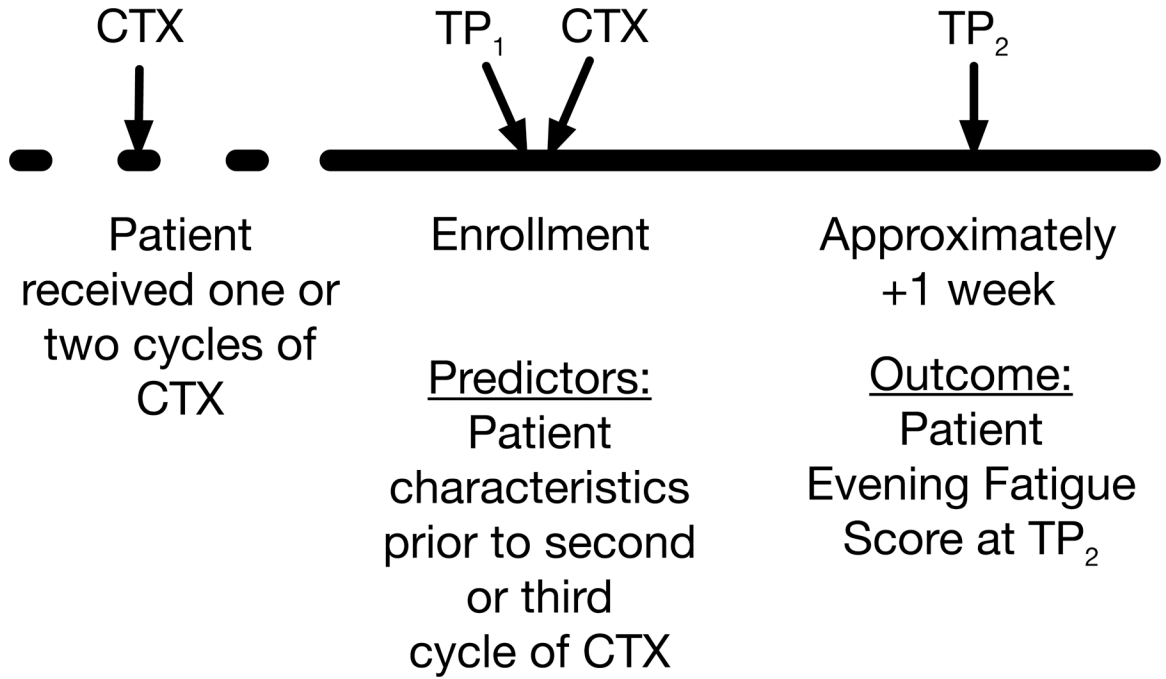


Figure 1. Timeline depicting when the predictor variables at Time Point 1 (TP₁) and outcome variable at Time Point 2 (TP₂) were collected. All patients were enrolled prior to their second or third cycle of chemotherapy (chemotherapy). TP₁ occurred at enrollment into this study and prior to the patient's second or third cycle of chemotherapy. TP₂ occurred approximately one week (+1) after the enrollment visit.

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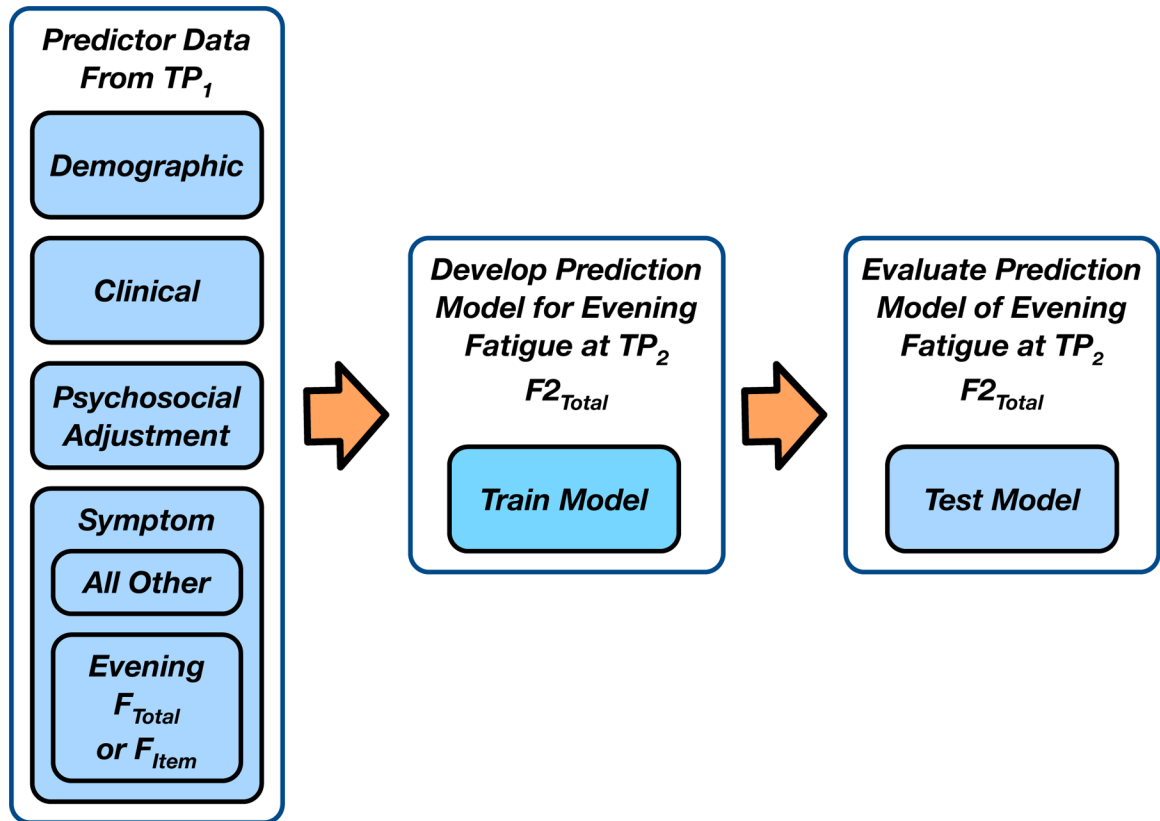


Figure 2.

A depiction of the data collected at Time Point 1 (TP₁) used to develop the models to predict evening fatigue at Time Point 2 (TP₂). Evening fatigue at TP₁ is characterized as either the total score (F1_{Total}) or scale items (F1_{Item}) of the Lee Fatigue Scale.

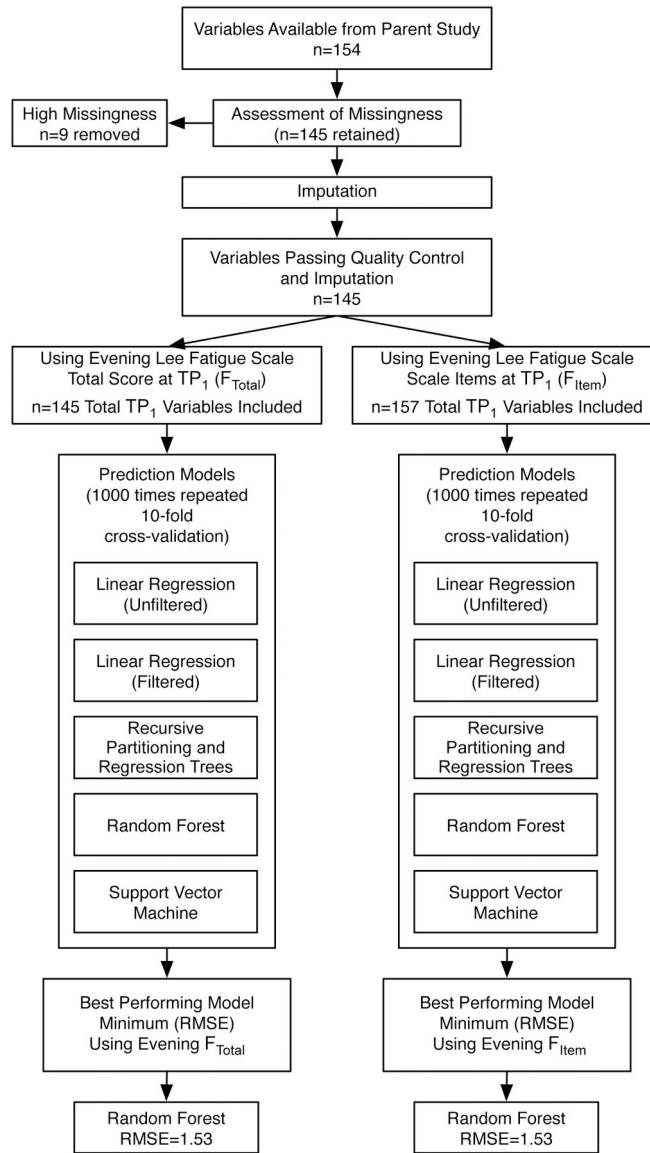


Figure 3. Overview of the analysis approached used to develop prediction models of evening fatigue at Time Point 2 from demographic and clinical characteristics at Time Point 1 (TP₁).

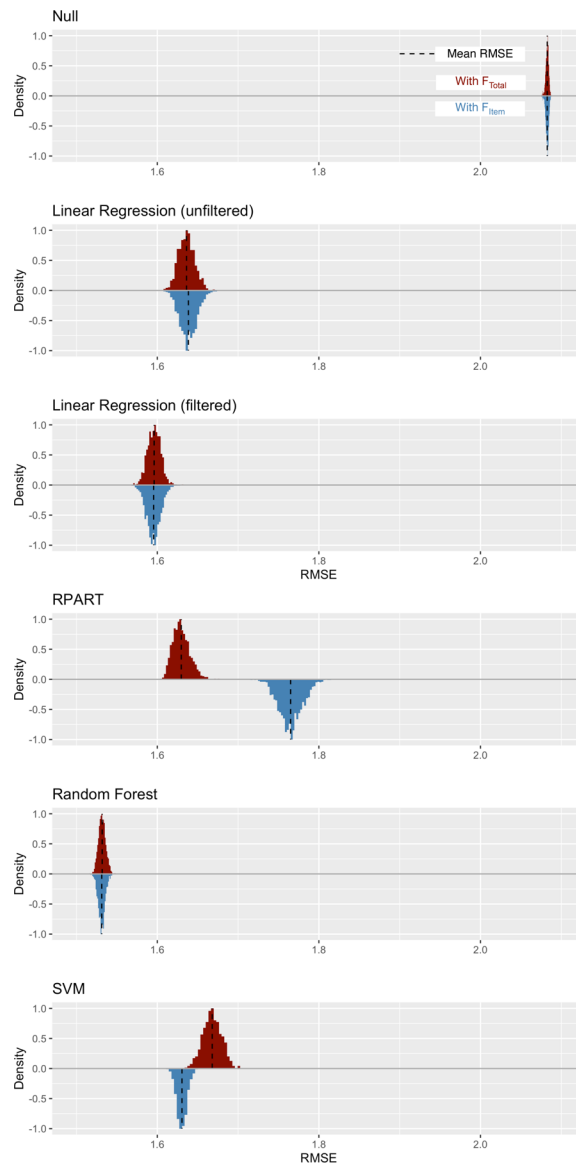


Figure 4. Comparisons of the performance of prediction models for evening fatigue one week following the administration of chemotherapy using demographic, clinical and psychosocial adjustment characteristics assessed prior to the at administration of chemotherapy. Abbreviations: F1_{Item}, Evening Lee Fatigue Scale Item Score at Time Point 1; F1_{Total}, Evening Lee Fatigue Scale Total Score at Time Point 1; RMSE, root mean square error; TS, total score; SI, scale items.

Table 1.

Individual items on the Lee Fatigue Scale (LFS) and summary of other studies that used items from the LFS.

Description		Lerdal <i>et al.</i> , 2013 ^[1]	Lerdal <i>et al.</i> , 2016 ^[2]	Bragstad <i>et al.</i> , 2020 ^[3]
<u>Study summary</u>				
Instrument		5-item LFS	10-item LFS	3-item LFS
Fatigue		Evening, Morning	Evening	Not specified
Study sample		Women with HIV	Patients with cancer	People with stroke and osteoarthritis
Country		US	US	Norway
Item No.	<u>LFS Items</u>			
1	Tired	*	*	*
2	Sleep	-	*	
3	Drowsy	-	*	
4	Fatigued	*	*	*
5	Worn out [^]	*	*	*
11	Bushed	*	*	
12	Exhausted [^]	*	*	
13	Keeping my eyes open	-	*	
14	Moving my body	-	-	
15	Concentrating	-	-	
16	Carrying on a conversation	-	-	-
17	Desire to close my eyes	-	*	-
18	Desire to lie down	-	*	

Abbreviations: HIV, Human immunodeficiency virus.

Empty space, Not evaluated in Rasch analysis

⁻, Not retained after Rasch analysis

^{*}, Retained after Rasch analysis

[^], Top predictors of evening fatigue one week following chemotherapy in our analysis using LFS scale items for the week prior to administration of chemotherapy.

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Table 2.

Demographic, Clinical, Symptom, and Psychosocial Adjustment Characteristics of the Patients at Timepoint 1 (n=1217)

Demographic Characteristics	
Age (years; mean (SD))	56.9 (12.3)
Gender (% female (n))	78.0 (950)
Ethnicity (% (n))	
White	69.6 (836)
Black Non-Hispanic	6.8 (82)
Asian/Pacific Islander	12.8 (154)
Hispanic/Mixed/Other	10.8 (130)
Education (years; mean (SD))	16.2 (3.0)
Married or partnered (% yes (n))	59.1 (706)
Lives alone (% yes (n))	21.6 (259)
Currently employed (% yes (n))	35.2 (425)
Child care responsibilities (% yes (n))	22.3 (267)
Income (% (n))	
Less than \$30,000	18.5 (201)
\$30,000 to <\$70,000	21.0 (229)
\$70,000 to < \$100,000	16.6 (181)
More than \$100,000	43.8 (477)
Clinical Characteristics	
Self-administered Comorbidity Questionnaire score (mean (SD))	5.4 (3.2)
Body mass index (kg/m ² ; mean (SD))	26.2 (5.7)
Hemoglobin (gm/dL; mean (SD))	11.5 (1.4)
Karnofsky Performance Status score (mean (SD))	80.1 (12.5)
Exercise on a regular basis (% yes (n))	70.7 (843)
Cancer diagnosis	
Breast	40.8 (496)
Gastrointestinal	30.3 (369)
Gynecological	17.3 (211)
Lung	11.6 (141)
Time since cancer diagnosis (years; mean (SD))	1.9 (3.8)
Number prior cancer treatments (mean (SD))	1.6 (1.5)
CTX toxicity MAX2 score (mean (SD))	0.2 (0.1)
Number of metastatic sites including lymph node involvement (mean (SD))	1.2 (1.2)
Number of metastatic sites excluding lymph node involvement (mean (SD))	0.8 (1.1)
Symptom Characteristics	
Lee Fatigue Scale: evening fatigue total score (mean (SD))	5.3 (2.1)
Lee Fatigue Scale: morning fatigue total score (mean (SD))	3.1 (2.3)
Lee Fatigue Scale: evening energy total score (mean (SD))	3.5 (2.0)
Lee Fatigue Scale: morning energy total score (mean (SD))	4.4 (2.3)

Demographic Characteristics	
Pain present (% yes (n))	72.2 (869)
Psychosocial Adjustment Characteristics	
Center for Epidemiological Studies-Depression Scale total score (mean (SD))	12.7 (9.7)
General Sleep Disturbance Scale score (mean (SD))	52.3 (20.4)
Spielberger Trait Anxiety score (mean (SD))	35.1 (10.5)
Spielberger State Anxiety score (mean (SD))	33.8 (12.4)
Conner-Davidson Resilience Scale (mean (SD))	30.1 (6.3)
Attentional Function Index (mean (SD))	6.4 (1.8)
Perceived Stress Scale (mean (SD))	18.4 (8.2)
Impact of Event Scale-Revised (mean (SD))	18.5 (13.0)
Herth Hope Index (mean (SD))	40.3 (5.4)

Abbreviations: CTX, chemotherapy; gm/dL, grams per deciliter; kg/m², kilograms per meters squared; SD, standard deviation; RT, radiation therapy.

Table 3.

Performance of the final models for predicting evening fatigue in the week following the administration of chemotherapy using evening fatigue at time point 1 measured as the total score of the Lee Fatigue Scale.

Method	Mean Predicted $F2_{Total}$	SD Predicted $F2_{Total}$	Mean RMSE	Relative Performance ^a	2.5% ^b	97.5% ^b
Random forest	5.61	1.31	1.53	0.0%	1.52	1.54
Linear regression (Filtered)	5.62	1.52	1.60	4.2%	1.58	1.61
RPART	5.62	1.32	1.63	6.4%	1.61	1.65
Linear regression (Unfiltered)	5.62	1.57	1.64	6.8%	1.62	1.66
Support vector machine	5.65	1.66	1.67	8.9%	1.65	1.69
Mean (null model)	5.62	0.00	2.08	36.0%	2.08	2.09

Abbreviations: ELFS, Evening Lee Fatigue Scale; $F2_{Total}$, ELFS total score at time point 2; RMSE, root mean square error; RPART, recursive partitioning and regression Trees; SD, standard deviation

^aThe ratio of (RSEM model/RSME RF model) expressed as a percentage.

^bRMSE percentiles based on simulation (replicate count = 1000).

Table 4.

The top fifteen predictors with highest variable importance for random forest models using Evening LFS Total Score or Evening LFS Items at Time 1.

Rank	RF Model Using Evening LFS Total Score at T1		RF Model Using Evening LFS Scale Items at T1	
	T1 Predictor	Score ^a	T1 Predictor	Score ^a
1	Evening F1 _{Total}	100.00	Evening F1 _{Item} - Worn out	100.00
2	GSDS Excessive Daytime Sleepiness - MS	11.68	Evening F1 _{Item} - Exhausted	93.52
3	Morning LFS TS	11.20	Evening F1 _{Item} - Fatigued	63.81
4	Evening LES TS	8.81	Evening F1 _{Item} - Concentrating	56.62
5	GSDS Total - Sum Score	5.46	Evening F1 _{Item} - Bushed	47.08
6	NEO-FFI Openness Subscale Raw Score	4.45	Evening F1 _{Item} - Desire to lie down	45.14
7	Number of MSAS Symptoms Out of 38	3.47	Evening F1 _{Item} - Keeping my eyes open	34.23
8	New AFI Attentional Lapses Subscale	3.23	Evening F1 _{Item} - Desire to close my eyes	32.51
9	White blood cell count	2.80	Evening F1 _{Item} - Conversation Effort	29.02
10	Age	2.73	Evening F1 _{Item} - Moving my body	23.41
11	Morning LES TS	2.59	Evening LES TS	18.39
12	Mean corpuscular hemoglobin	2.57	Morning LFS TS	16.71
13	Time from Diagnosis to Start of Study in Years	2.55	GSDS Excessive Daytime Sleepiness - MS	16.43
14	New AFI TS	2.47	Evening F1 _{Item} - Drowsy	16.42
15	CESD Somatic Subscale	2.46	Evening F1 _{Item} - Tired	13.99

Abbreviations: AFI, Attentional Function Index; CARET, Classification And REgression Training; CESD, Center for Epidemiological Studies-Depression scale; F1_{Item}, Evening LFS item at time point 1; F1_{Total}, Evening LFS total score at time point 1; GSDS, General Sleep Disturbance Scale; KPS, Karnofsky Performance Status; LES, Lee Energy Scale; LFS, Lee Fatigue Scale; MS, Mean score; MSAS, Memorial Symptom Assessment Scale; NEO-FFI, NEO Five-Factor Inventory; RF, Random Forest

^aThe variable importance score was calculated by the CARET tool (<https://topepo.github.io/caret/variable-importance.html>) for the random forest model. Variable importance scores are not comparable between models.

Table 5.

Performance of the final models for predicting evening fatigue in the week following the administration of chemotherapy using evening fatigue at time point 1 measured as the scale items of the Lee Fatigue Scale.

Method	Mean Predicted $F2_{Item}$	SD Predicted $F2_{Item}$	Mean RMSE	Relative Performance ^a	2.5% ^b	97.5% ^b
Random Forest	5.61	1.27	1.53	0.0%	1.52	1.54
Linear Regression (Filtered)	5.62	1.53	1.60	4.2%	1.58	1.61
Support Vector Machine	5.69	1.35	1.63	6.5%	1.62	1.64
Linear Regression (Unfiltered)	5.62	1.59	1.64	7.0%	1.62	1.66
RPART	5.62	1.14	1.76	15.3%	1.74	1.79
Mean (null model)	5.62	0.00	2.08	36.0%	2.08	2.09

Abbreviations: CTX, chemotherapy; ELFS, $F2_{Item}$, ELFS total score at time point 2, ELFS total score at time point 2; RMSE, Root mean square error; RPART, Recursive Partitioning and Regression Trees; SD, standard deviation

^aThe ratio of (RSEM model/RSME random forest model) expressed as a percentage.

^bRMSE percentiles based on simulation (replicate count = 1000).