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Title

Anxiety and Fear During the Covid-19 Pandemic: A Web-Based Survey of Thyroid Cancer Survivors

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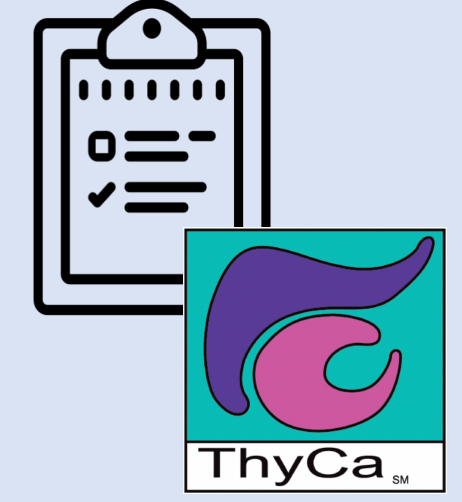
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Background

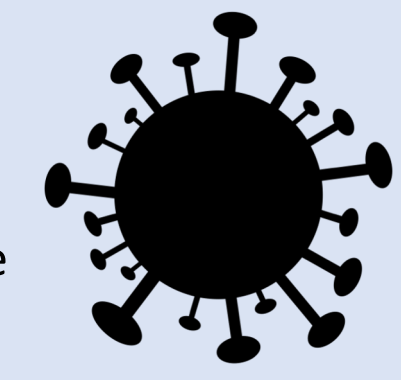
The coronavirus (COVID-19 or COVID) pandemic has led to rapid changes in our society and healthcare system. Cancer patients and survivors may be disproportionately affected by these changes, including decreased access to healthcare, increased infection risk, and economic challenges. We sought to determine the effects of the pandemic on thyroid cancer survivors' quality of life.

Methods

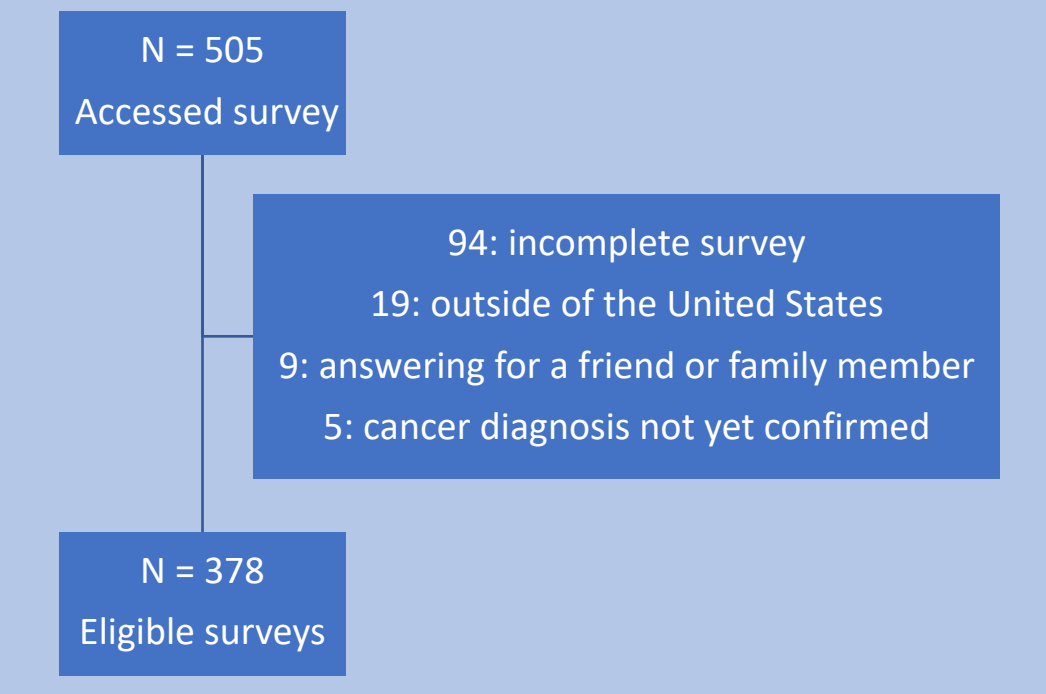
Anonymous web-based survey hosted on the Thyroid Cancer Survivor's Association homepage 5/6/2020 – 10/8/2020



Questions included demographic and cancer characteristics, attitudes towards and impact of COVID-19 on personal life and on interactions with healthcare providers.



Respondents completed the Patient-Reported Outcomes Measurement Information System (PROMIS)-29 item profile, which was compared to pre-COVID benchmark data and normative scores.



Results

Table 1: Demographic and clinical characteristics of respondents

Characteristic	Total N = 378
Age, in years, median (IQR)*	54 (22-85)
Identify as female gender, n (%)	335 (88.6)
Race/Ethnicity n (%)	
White	334 (88.3)
Years since diagnosis, median (IQR)	7 (2-12)
Cancer type, n (%)	
Papillary	279 (74.4)
Medullary	41 (10.9)
Follicular	26 (6.9)
Hürthle cell	17 (4.5)
NIFTP	6 (1.6)
Anaplastic	1 (0.3)
Cancer stage, n (%)	
I	101 (28.1)
II	63 (17.6)
III	58 (16.2)
IV	60 (16.7)
Unknown or not yet staged	77 (20.5)
Previous surgery, n (%)	366 (96.8)
Previous radioactive iodine, n (%)	265 (70.1)
Diagnosed with COVID, n (%)	7 (1.9)
Family or friend with COVID	54 (14.3)

*IQR = interquartile range

Figure 2: COVID-related changes

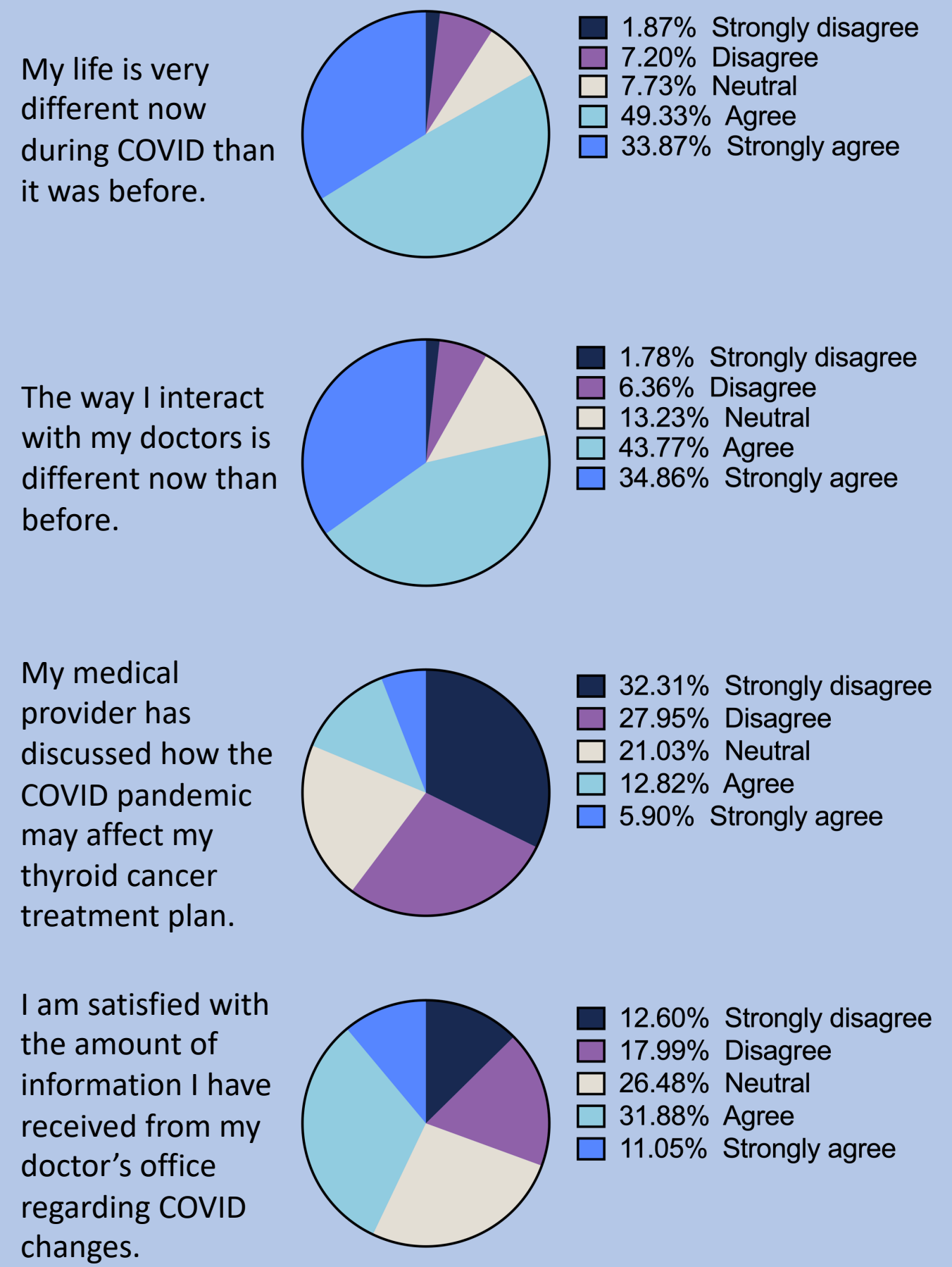


Figure 3: PROMIS scores (p values refer to COVID scores vs. normative data)

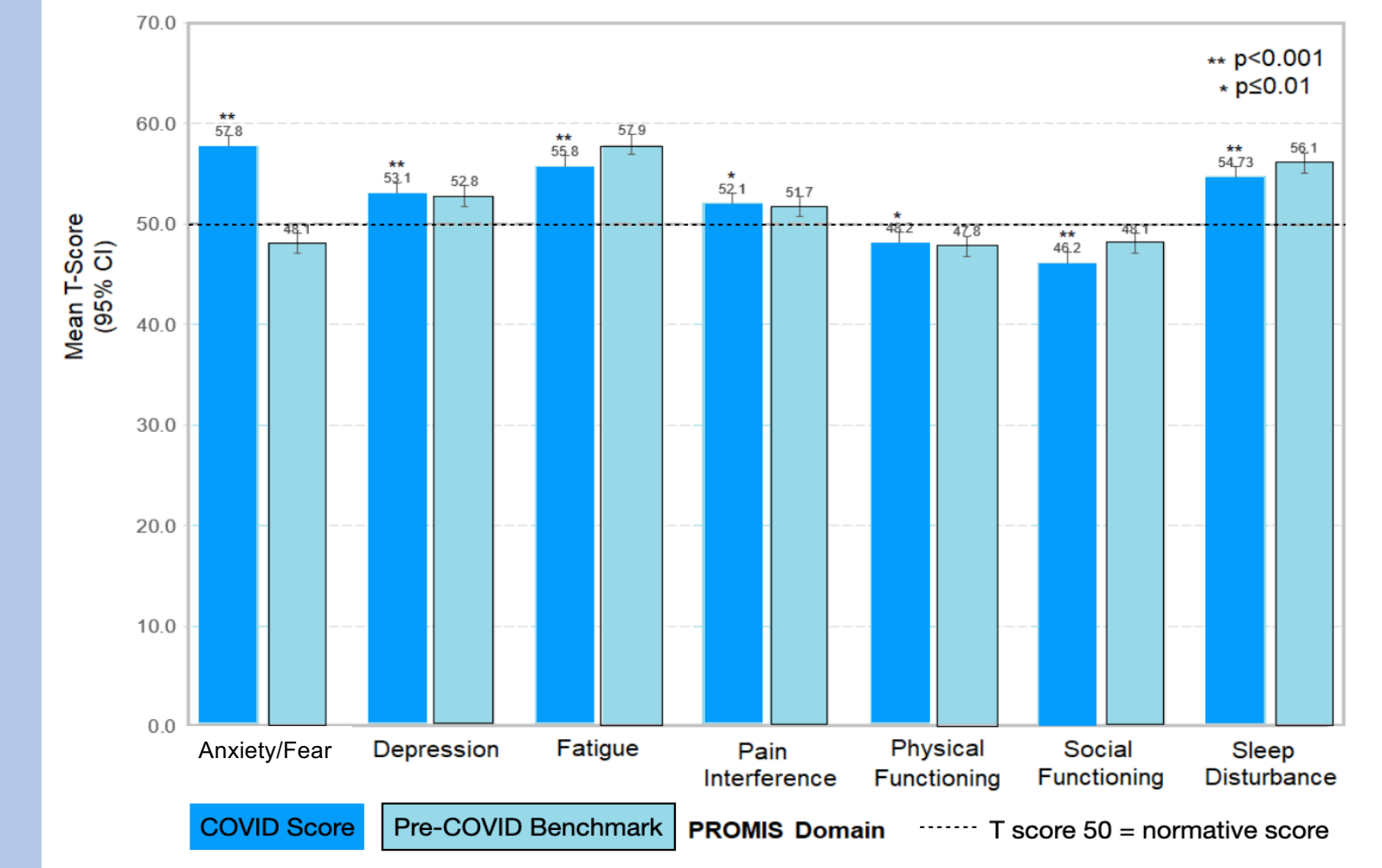
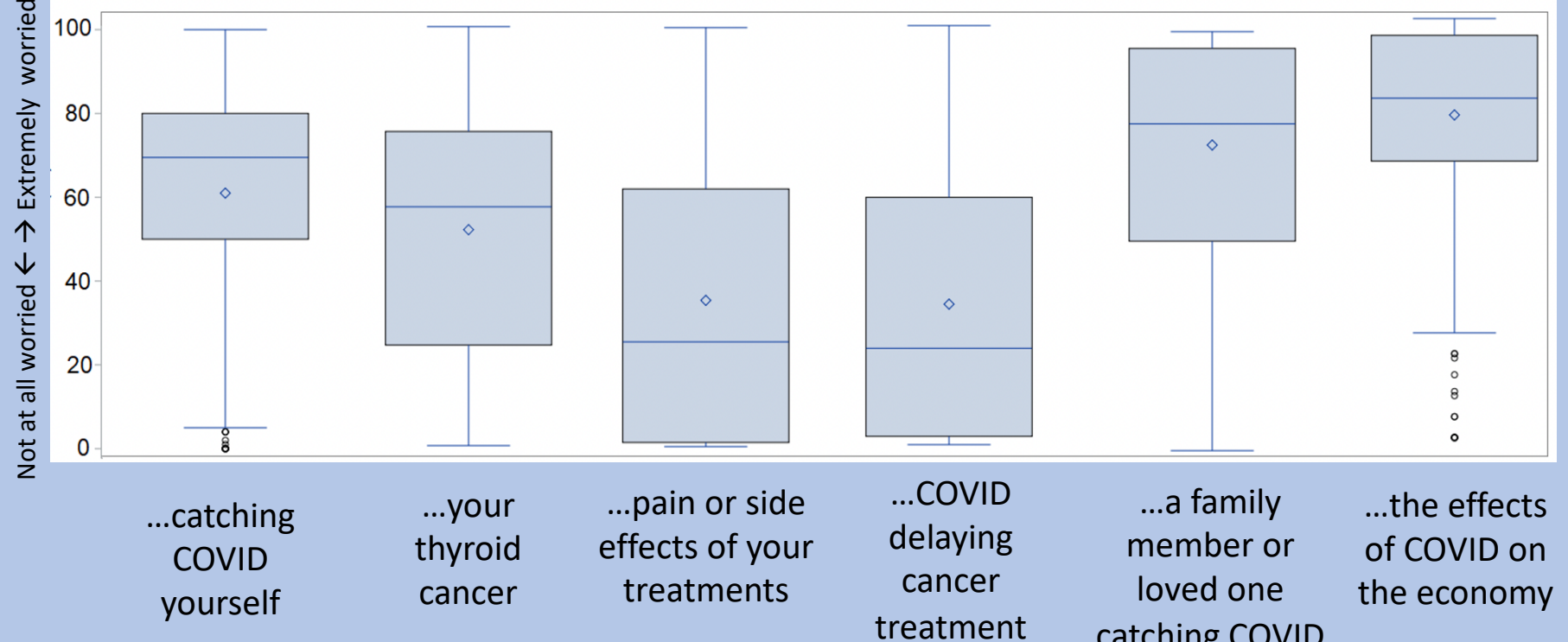


Figure 4: Over the past 7 days, how worried have you been about...



Conclusions

- Despite changes in their lives and interactions with healthcare providers, most respondents had not had conversations with their medical providers about how COVID-19 may affect their treatment, and less than half were satisfied with the information they received from their doctors.
- Thyroid cancer survivors reported increased anxiety/fear and decreased social participation during the pandemic, compared to pre-COVID benchmark data in thyroid cancer survivors.
- Respondents reported highest worry scores about the effects of COVID on the economy and about family or loved ones catching COVID.
- As we enter a new phase in the pandemic, communication between patients and providers about ongoing changes remains paramount.

Selected References

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