



# Talking to Your Doctor: A Videotape for Older Women Recently Diagnosed With Breast Cancer

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## Abbreviated Abstract

The aim of this proposal is to develop an innovative 25-minute videotape with a patient booklet about communication strategies for older breast cancer patients. The videotape will include women of diverse backgrounds and illustrate a range of communication concerns and strategies. The videotape and booklet will cover problems older breast cancer patients encounter in communicating with their doctors about their diagnosis and treatment. It will present communication strategies as solutions to these problems.

## Primary Investigator

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Sarah A. McGraw, Ph.D., is a medical anthropologist with a general focus in the areas of evaluation research and minority health. She has experience with the development and evaluation of community, school, and clinic-based interventions. Her methodological expertise includes population-based surveys, qualitative research, and process evaluation. Her experience in the development of the content, format, and evaluation of educational media includes the production and evaluation of two videos and two interactive CD-ROM programs. She was the principal investigator on a project to develop, evaluate, and distribute a video for educators on employing peer leaders in substance abuse prevention. She was the principal investigator on two other projects to produce and evaluate interactive CD-ROM programs for adolescents. One, a CD-ROM for high school students on HIV/AIDS called "The Zone," and another for middle school students on alcohol use, "Where is Matt?"

## Research Team & Affiliations

Shelly Adler, Ph.D., University of California, San Francisco, CA, Co-PI

Debashish Tripathy, MD, Breast Care Center, University of California, San Francisco, Co-Investigator

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## Total Budget

\$501,544.00

## Research Objectives

Aim 1: Develop a videotape and brochure for older women recently diagnosed with breast to facilitate their communication with their doctors about treatment decisions

Aim 2: To test the impact of the videotape and brochure on patient communication behaviors

Aim 3: To assess the impact of the videotape and brochure on intentions to use decision aids and attitudes about information seeking

## Theory/Hypothesis

Role modeling communication skills and the use of communication aids will encourage older women to ask more questions and participate more actively in decisions regarding treatment of their breast cancer.

## Experimental Design

Two-armed, randomized trial with pre and post-test measures. Subjects randomized to the treatment condition viewed the videotape and received the brochure at the hospital clinic and then were allowed to take the materials home for additional viewing. Subjects randomized to the control condition received the same package after completing the post-test.

## Final Sample Size & Study Demographics

- N=147 (48% in treatment condition)
- Average age: 65 years (range 55-86)
- 92% white, 3.4% Latina, 2.7% African American and 2.0% Asian or Pacific Islander
- 75% with at least a high school education.
- Average length of time between diagnosis and baseline interview was 4.4 weeks

## Data Collection Methods

Baseline data were collected through telephone or in-person interviews. Follow-up interviews were completed by telephone.

## Outcome Measures

Primary outcomes: 1) Frequency of use of communication aids such as writing lists, note taking, bringing someone else to the visit, audio-recording the visit; 2) Patient self assessment of the extent to which she expressed her opinions about her treatment (Lerman, 1990)

Secondary outcomes: 1) Intentions to use decision aids on future visits; 2) Perceived ability to communicate with her doctor (Silliman, 1997); 3) Attitudes towards information seeking (Ende, 1989)



## Evaluation Methods

Subjects recruited through three hospital breast cancer clinics – two in Massachusetts and one in San Francisco. Post test measures obtained up to 6 weeks after the pre-test. Response rates at baseline were 70% and 69% at follow-up. Intervention effects estimated with linear multiple regressions, controlling for subject background and study characteristics. Differences in unadjusted rates assess using t-tests.

## Research Results

- Majority (94%) of subjects viewed the video and 61% read the brochure
- Increased intentions to use decisions aids ( $p = 0.03$ )
- Trend to more positive attitudes about participation in decision making ( $p=0.06$ )
- No significant effects on expressing opinions, use of decision aids or perceived communication ability
- Women who did increase their use of decision aids were more likely to be African American ( $p=0.003$ ), reported more physician visits ( $p = 0.03$ ) and were more likely to have a female physician ( $p = 0.02$ ).

## Barriers & Solutions

- Problem: Recruiting enough subjects within study time frame; Solution: Added a third clinic site
- Problem: Difficulty schedule baseline interviews at the clinics. Solution: Gave respondents the option of completing the baseline questionnaire through a telephone interview.

## Product(s) Developed from This Research

Talking to Your Doctor About Breast Cancer: The product is a 25-Minute videotape and with an accompanying brochure. The content covers topics on how to prepare for a discussion with a doctor about treatment choices for breast cancer. The videotape and brochure describe and role-model possible questions to ask, strategies for asking questions, and managing information between visits.