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Health communication sources and cancer survivors' Information Seeking

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Introduction

Background

Active information seeking about cancer would provide cancer survivors with various beneficial outcomes, such as improved capacity to make informed decisions, better coping skills, and better adherence to treatment.

Aim

This study investigates the association between cancer information seeking behavior among cancer survivors and their exposure to different health communication resources other than their health providers.

Main Hypothesis

- **H1:** Connection to a social network (family or friends) for health information increases cancer information seeking among cancer survivors.
- **H2:** Connection to local media (TV, Newspapers/Magazines) for health information increases cancer information seeking among cancer survivors.
- **H3:** Connection to community organizations for health information increases cancer information seeking among cancer survivors.
- **H4:** Connection to the Internet for health information increases cancer information seeking among cancer survivors.

Method

Data

We used a sub-sample of cancer survivors (n=873) in the Health Information National Trends Survey 2005 dataset, a national representative telephone survey of U.S. adults conducted by the National Cancer Institute (NCI) (total n=5586).

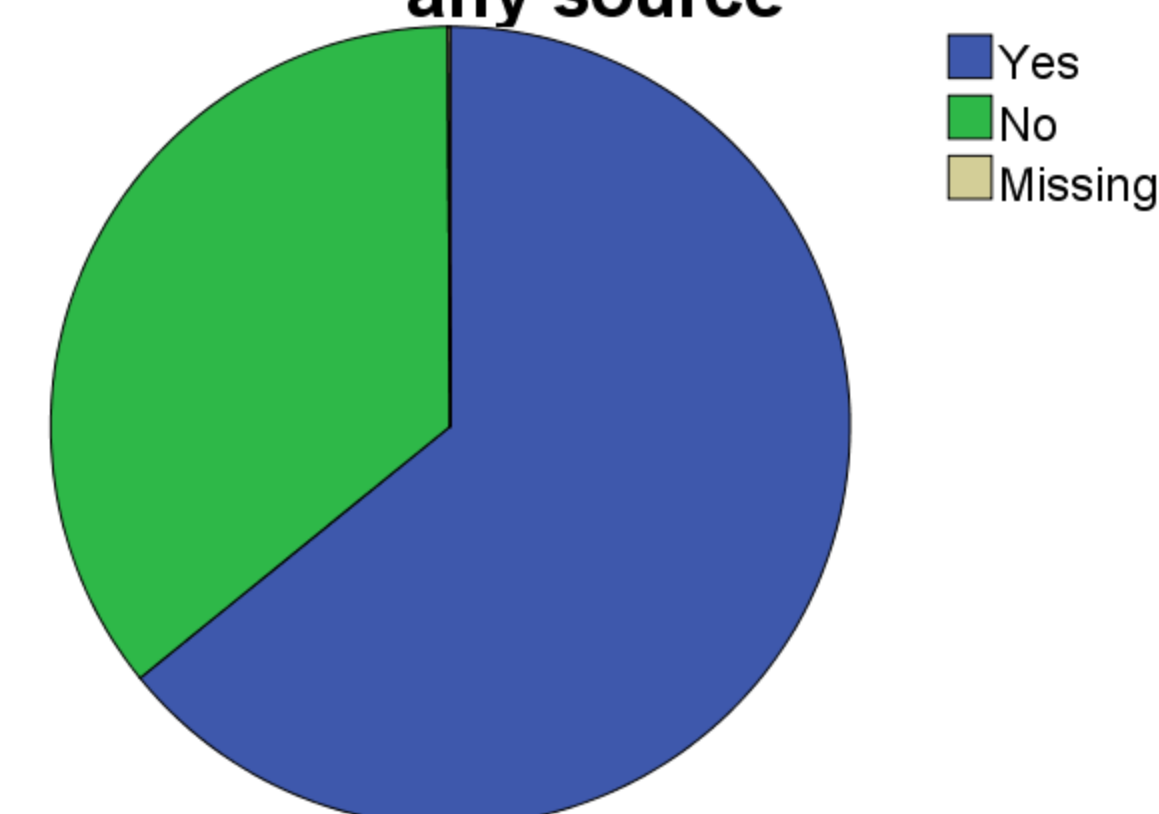
◆ **Analysis:** Logistic regression analysis using SPSS 16.0

Results

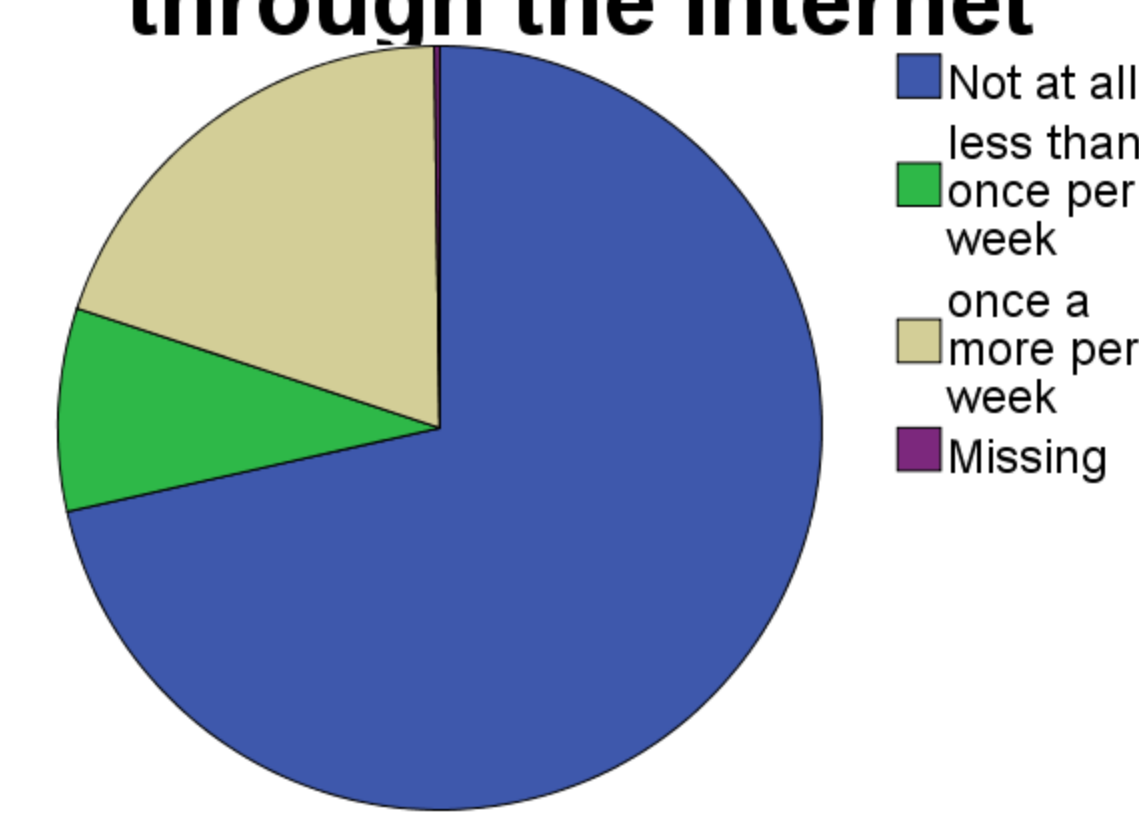
Demographics:

- **Age:** 0.3% are below the age of 20; 1.4% are in their twenties; 4.2% are in their thirties; 10.7% are in their forties; 18.6% are in their fifties; 22.1% are in their sixties; 42.7% are age the age of seventy or more.
- **Gender:** About 68.3% of the survivors are female.
- **Ethnicity:** 83.6% of them are Non-Hispanic White.
- **Education:** 12% of the cancer survivors have less than high school education; 26.7% of them are high school graduate; 30.5% of them attend some college; 15.0% of them has Bachelor's degree; 12.4% of them has the post-baccalaureate degree.

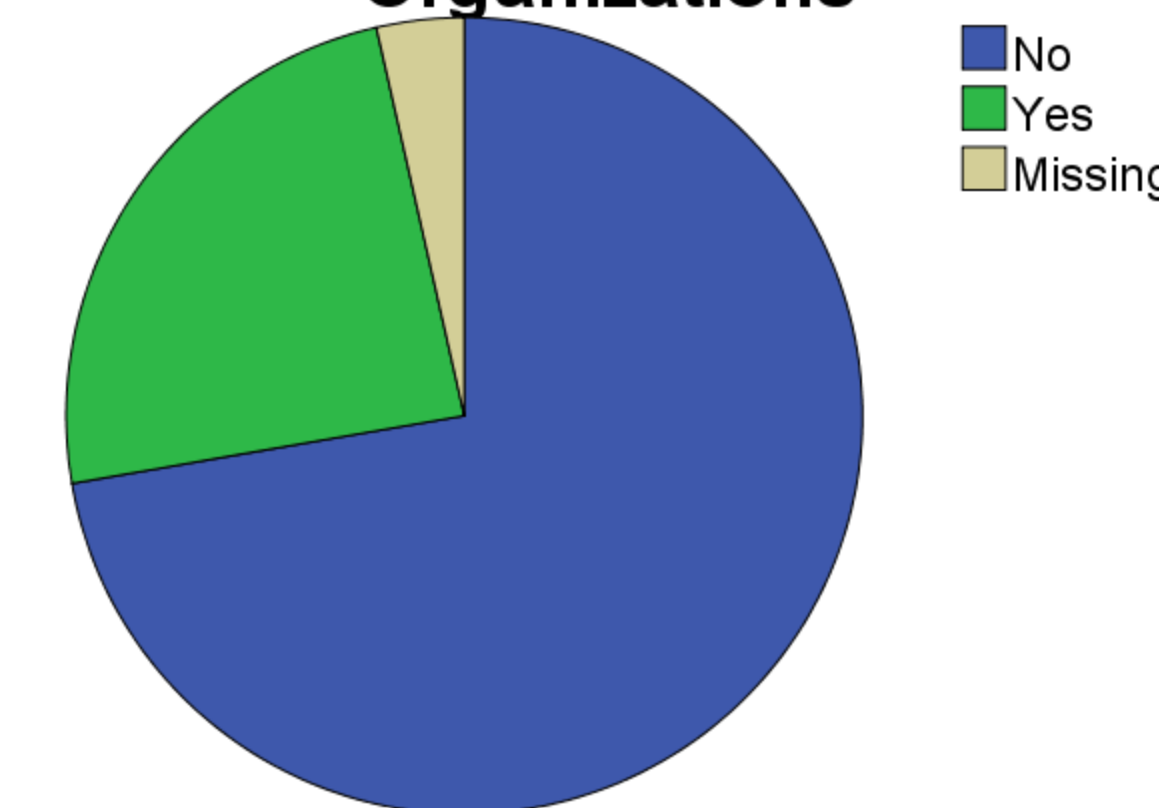
Seeking cancer information from any source



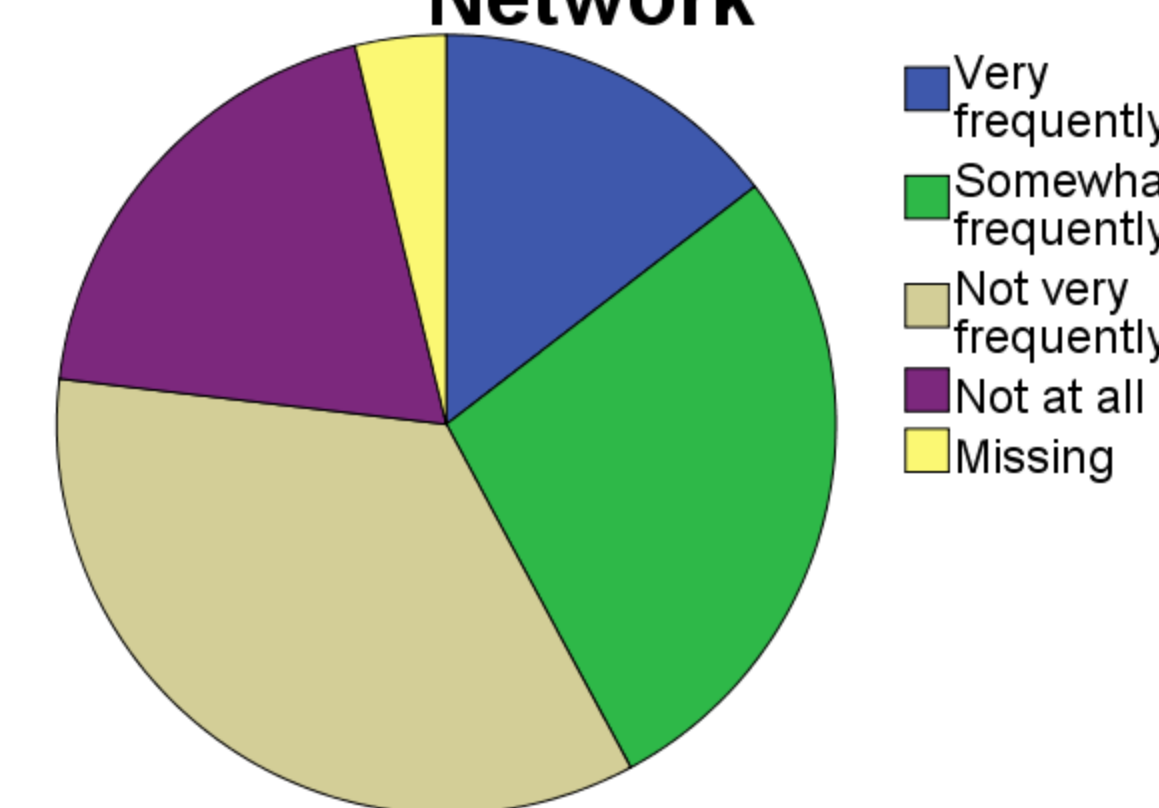
Health Information through the Internet



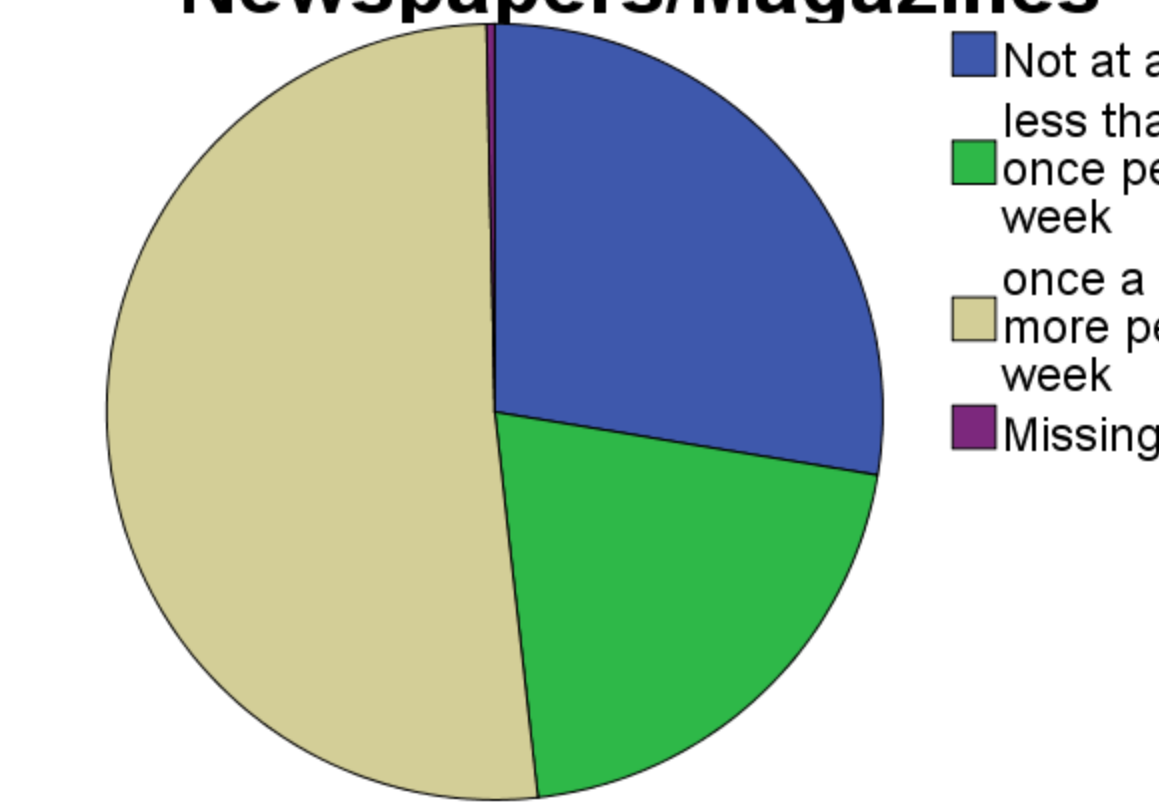
Health Talk through Community Organizations



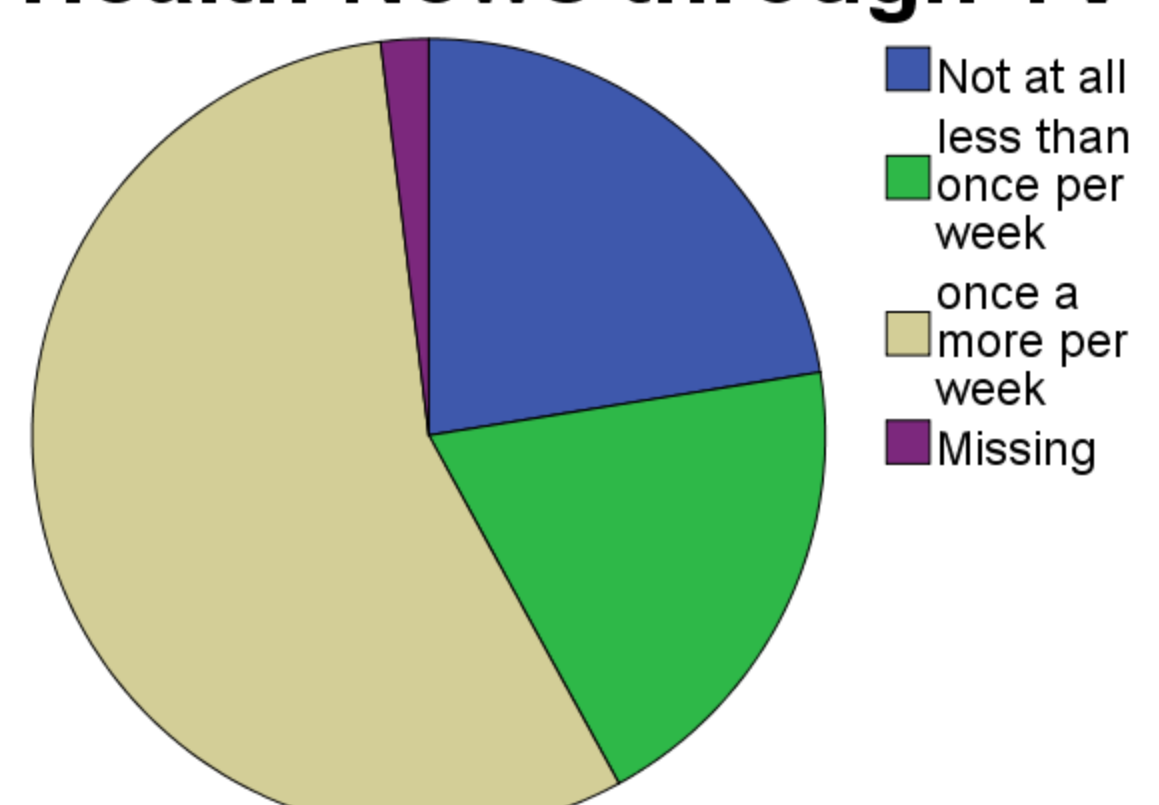
Health Talk Through Social Network



Health Information through Newspapers/Magazines



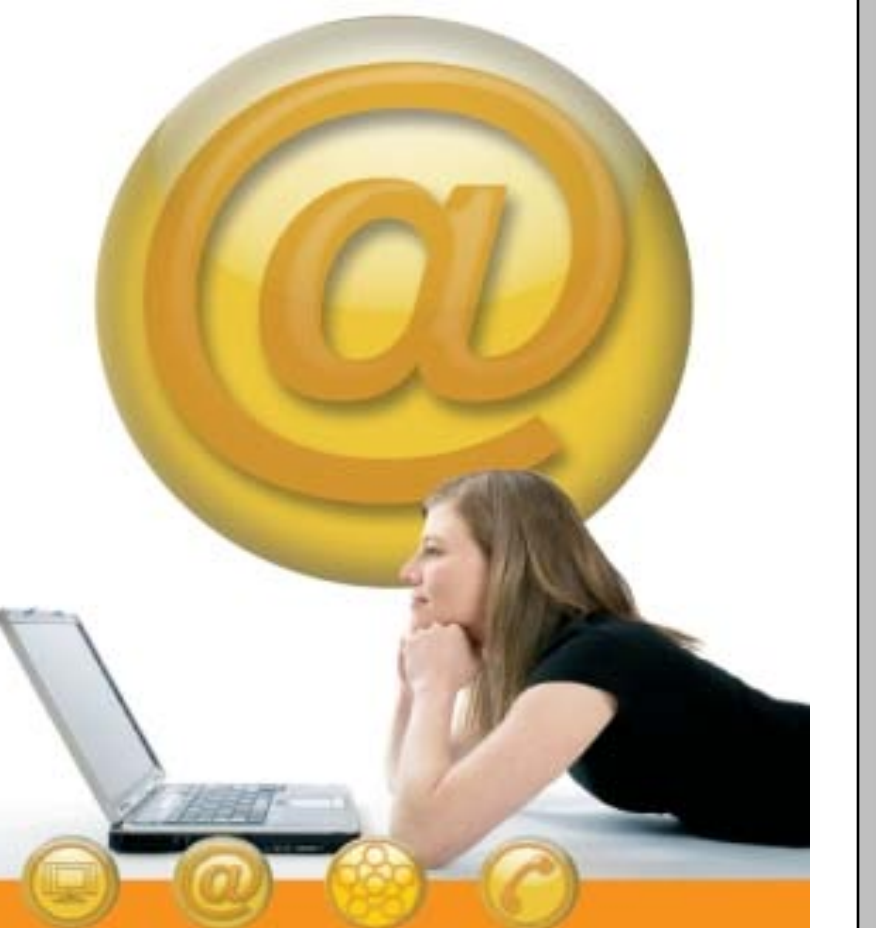
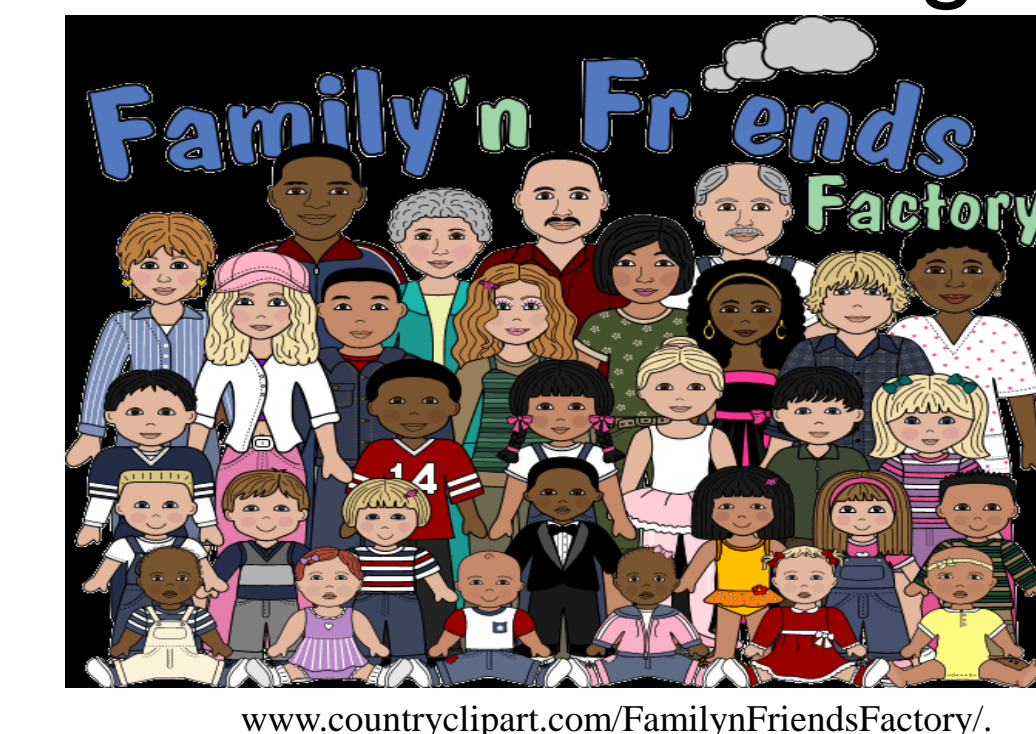
Health News through TV



Conclusions

Logistic regression analysis result shows

➤ After controlling for age, gender, education, income, ethnicity, time since diagnosis and treatment, exposure to health news through **newspapers/magazines, the Internet, and health talk with family and friends** were significantly related to cancer information seeking behavior.



➤ Among the covariates, **education and time since diagnosis** were significantly related to cancer information seeking.

Discussion

- These results imply that **health information through newspapers/magazines, the Internet, family and friends**, are important sources to promote cancer information seeking among cancer survivors.
- Future public health interventions targeting cancer survivors might need to pay attention to the information environment and choose most effective information sources.

Acknowledgement

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