

**Title:**

Meta-Analysis and Systematic Review: Mindfulness Intervention for Informal Cancer Caregivers

**Colleen Kurzawa, MFA, MSN**

School of Nursing, Case Western Reserve University, Cleveland, OH, USA

Joyce J. Fitzpatrick, PhD, RN, FAAN

Frances Payne Bolton School of Nursing, Case Western Reserve University, Cleveland, OH, USA

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**Session Title:**

Caregivers of Oncology Patients

**Slot:**

C 02: Sunday, 29 October 2017: 10:45 AM-11:30 AM

**Scheduled Time:**

11:05 AM

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**Keywords:**

Informal Caregivers, Mindfulness and Psychological Distress

**References:**

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Fegg, M. J., Brandstatter, M., Kogler, M., Hauke, G., Rechenberg-Winter, P., Fensterer, V., Kuchenhoff, H., Hentrich, M., Belka, C., & Borasio, G. D. (2013). Existential behavioral Therapy for informal caregivers of palliative patients: A randomized controlled trial. *Psycho-Oncology*, 22, 2079-2086. doi: 10.1002/pon.3260

Kogler, M., Brandstatter, M., Borasio, G. D., Fensterer, V., Kuchenhoff, H., & Fegg, M. J. (2015). Mindfulness in informal caregivers of palliative patients. *Palliative and Supportive Care*, 13, 11-18. doi:10.1017/S1478951513000400

Oechsle, K., Goerth, K., Bokemeyer, C., & Mehnert, A. (2013). Anxiety and depression in caregivers of terminally ill cancer patients: impact on their perspective of the patients' symptom burden. *Journal of Palliative Medicine*, 16(9), 1095-101. <http://doi.org/10.1089/jpm.2013.0038>

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**Abstract Summary:**

Cancer caregivers experience increased psychological distress, decreased QOL, and increased risks of medical illness and death. Studies have suggested that mindfulness interventions decrease psychological

distress and increase QOL in patients. The purpose of this review is to determine the effects of mindfulness interventions on psychological distress of cancer caregivers.

**Learning Activity:**

LEARNING OBJECTIVES	EXPANDED CONTENT OUTLINE
The learner will be able to identify populations that mindfulness has been used to decrease psychological distress.	1. Review research using mindfulness has been suggested to decrease psychological distress *healthcare professionals *patients with chronic conditions *caregivers of dementia patients
The learner will be able to describe results of meta analysis, forest plot, and risk of bias graphs.	1. Explain and show graphs *meta analysis *forest plot *risk of bias
The learner will be able to analyze results of this meta analysis and systematic review.	1. Present how results were analyzed *key findings, *limitations 2. Present novel findings

**Abstract Text:**

**Introduction:** Family Caregivers are the foundation of long-term care nationwide and exceed Medicaid long-term spending in all states. Caregivers of cancer patients face multiple issues when caring for family members at the end of life. The quality of life for informal caregivers of cancer patients is influenced by the illness trajectory of the cancer patient. It has been suggested that informal caregivers have a lower quality of life and face increased stress and burden. Informal caregivers face intense strain due to the challenges of new and increased needs of the cancer patient and challenges of the caregiver role. When caregivers spend more time physically and emotionally providing care, there is less time for self-care needs and it may be challenging to work outside of the home.

Informal caregivers of cancer patients experience increased psychological distress, decreased quality of life, and increased risks of medical illness and death. Several studies have suggested that mindfulness interventions decrease psychological distress and increase quality of life in patients with chronic conditions, health care professionals, and caregivers of dementia patients. However, little is known regarding the effects of mindfulness interventions on informal cancer caregivers. The purpose of this meta-analysis and systematic review is to determine the effects of mindfulness interventions on psychological distress of caregivers' for hospice cancer patients.

**Methods:** Electronic databases (PubMed, Embase, Cochrane, and CINAHL) were searched from inception to February 6, 2016 without language restrictions. Studies were included if they were randomized controlled trials, subjects were informal caregivers of cancer patients at the end of life, and included mindfulness interventions. For psychological distress, we used a random effects model to calculate the pooled standardized mean difference and 95% confidence interval (CI).

**Results:** Out of 1672 citations, four studies (N=320) met our inclusion criteria. We found inconsistent results for the use of mindfulness interventions versus standard care to decrease psychological distress in informal caregivers of cancer patients (standardized mean difference = 1.21 and 95% CI = -0.92, 3.34).

**Conclusions:** Mindfulness had mixed effects on caregivers' psychological distress. Further studies will help elucidate what aspects of mindfulness interventions are most associated with the greatest effects.

**Implications for Practice:** Informal caregivers with less stress may have decreased psychological distress that promote caregiving behaviors and reduce the damaging effects of the caregiver role. The meta-analysis and systematic review identifies several critical gaps in the extant literature and

underscores the need for clinical trials of mindfulness interventions to reduce the psychological burdens of informal caregivers.