



# More Than Just Makeup: A Beauty Focused Intervention for Breast Cancer Survivors with Past or Active Chemotherapy

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## Introduction

- The purpose of this pilot program to address body image concerns for the women at the Forge Breast Cancer Survivor Center for breast cancer survivors who have had past or active chemotherapy through the use of beauty-focused interventions.
- The program aims to address body image concerns using occupational therapy, specifically through makeup application as an ADL grooming activity. According to the American Association of Occupational Therapy (AOTA), occupational therapy practitioners should be involved in creating programs that enhance health, well-being, and social participation for all individuals (Reitz et al., 2020, p. 15).
- The program highlights the need for more informed choices and strategies concerning the psychological and emotional needs of individuals with breast cancer.
- By advocating for the inclusion of this beauty focused intervention in cancer treatment programs, Forge Breast Cancer Survivor Center can enhance the overall experience and outcomes for breast cancer survivors.

## Methods

- The program was funded through Forge Breast Cancer Survivor Center and UAB OT Donor.
- Participants were recruited using Forge's social media network and through Forge's organized event.
- Eighteen individuals reached out to participate in this study. Of the 18 individuals, 8 did not meet the inclusionary criteria of having both a breast cancer diagnosis and having past or active chemotherapy. Of the remaining 10 individuals, 2 responded back with scheduling conflicts and 2 did not follow up with the study investigator. Thus, a total of 6 individuals participated in the study and met the inclusion criteria.
- A total of 9 classes were taught over 3 weeks. Each week pertaining to a different topic. Week one: All about Eyes; Week 2: Brows and Lashes; Week Three: All about Face
- Participants were requested to take a pre and post survey in addition to a Body Image Questionnaire (BIQ), which tests for Body Dysmorphic Disorder (BDD)
- Post- Participation – a collective total of 24 responses from Qualtrics Data and a total of 13 responses from BIQ questionnaire

## Results

- 6 participants total for the program. In week one, 6 participants attended the program but only 5 completed both the pre-and-post survey, resulting in an N=5. In week two, 5 participants attended the program but only 4 completed both surveys, giving an N=4.
- Week three saw 3 participants attend with only 2 completing both surveys, leaving an N=2.
- It is important to note, that a total of two individuals completed the both the classes and survey from start to finish. The data collected from week three will be an accurate representation of the results. Data analysis of the program was calculated by taking the mean of the pre-and-post survey for each class, every week per question. The higher the number, the more confident or comfortable the participant is. The data was categorized by comfortability and confidence levels. Results did vary throughout the weeks as some participants did not complete both the pre-and-post survey
- BIQ results: During the first week, the scores are as follows: 32, 23, 36, and 32. During the second week of classes the results are as follows: 34, 36, 31, 33, 31. This final week of classes the results are: 32, 30, 32. Given these scores, none of the participants rendered a diagnosis of BDD which would be a score of 40 and above. The Cosmetic Procedure Screening Scale, or COPS, is a widely used self-report questionnaire designed to assess symptoms of BDD in cosmetic settings. In non-cosmetic settings, the scale is called the Body Image Questionnaire (BIQ)" (Veale et al., 2011).

## Results continued



## Discussion

- The pilot research program showed an increase in self-confidence and comfortability with makeup application skills after attending three consecutive weeks of classes for 100% of post-survey results.
- The findings of the program aligned with previous research on the impact of cosmetic intervention on self-esteem and body satisfaction.
- Educational empowerment was an overarching topic of the program, with participants learning new skills each week to help enhance their self-image during breast cancer awareness month.
- Anecdotal data from participants highlighted how the program helped them with their self-image, particularly after losing facial hair.
- The sense of community built among participants during the program was noted anecdotally as a positive outcome, providing support and shared experiences.

### STUDY LIMITATIONS

- Limitations such as length of weeks for classes due to wanting to support and promote research during breast cancer awareness month.
- Limitations such as not having enough time to recruit participants to adhere to time frame of research.
- Limitations such as the side effects of chemotherapy and its effect on participants while trying to conduct study.
- Adhering to strict budget and trying to be complicit to cosmetics safe for participants undergoing chemotherapy.
- Limitations such as having anecdotal data communicated during the classes, and not having a true assessment given to the participants.

### IMPLICATIONS:

- Implication such as the non-validation of the pre-and -post survey, therefore there could not be a generality of study results.
- Implication such as the the small sample size of the study.
- The use of the Body Image Questionnaire (BIQ), while this research is using a validated tool to measure body image there has been an implication as the questionnaire primarily focuses on the diagnosis of body dysmorphic disorder (BDD). The questions asked were relevant to the study; however, the outcome measured was not the targeted objective for this pilot program.

### FUTURE RESEARCH

- Future studies can extend criteria extend inclusion criteria to breast cancer survivors who have not undergone chemotherapy
- Future research could include the use of classes beyond three weeks for maximum outreach potential.

## Conclusion

Overall, this pilot program at Forge Breast Cancer Survivor Center demonstrated the effectiveness of integrating beauty-focused interventions for breast cancer survivors, with a focus on occupational therapy centric care. By providing support and empowerment through educational sessions on makeup application, the program addressed the psychological and emotional needs of participants, leading to increased self-confidence and comfort. Moving forward, advocating for the inclusion of these interventions in cancer treatment programs can further enhance the overall experience and outcomes for breast cancer survivors. Further research can explore extending the duration of classes and including a larger range of participants to maximize the impact of beauty-focused interventions in supporting individuals through their breast cancer journey.

## References

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