Digital Health Literacy and Breast Cancer Prevention: A Literature Review

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Abstract

The advancement of digital technology and the easy availability of internet-enabled smartphones opened a new era of health literacy in digital formats such as online video, social media, blogs, and other platforms to disseminate new and updated information for breast cancer patients. Although digital platforms are the third most used source of information among cancer patients, after the oncologists and print media, limited literature available on PubMed, Web of Science, and EMBASE (N=7), on the topic of digital health and its use among breast cancer patients. The main limitations of digital health literacy could be possible due to differences in awareness (education level), age (older vs. young), the language of medical content, socioeconomic condition, and geographical location of patients with breast cancer. Health literacy apps could offer a low-cost and effective strategy for breast cancer prevention in younger patients by providing more authentic and useful information. A more strategic approach is needed by healthcare professionals and organizations involving education, training, and implementation to fill the gap between digital health literacy and breast cancer prevention.