



The feminist approach in the decision-making process for treatment of women with breast cancer.

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Abstract: The principal aim of this review was to investigate a feminist approach to the decision-making process for women with breast cancer. Empirical research into patient preferences for being informed about and participating in healthcare decisions has some limitations because it is mostly quantitative and designed within the dominant medical culture. Indigenous medical knowledge and alternative medical treatments are not widely accepted because of the lack of confirmed efficacy of such treatments in evidence-based literature. While discussing their treatment options with oncologists, women with breast cancer frequently express many concerns regarding treatment side effects, and sometimes decline conventional treatment when the risks are too high.

A search of all relevant literary sources, including Pub-Med, ERIC, Medline, and the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education at the University of Toronto was conducted. The key words for selection of the articles were "feminism," "decision-making," "patients preferences for treatment," and "breast cancer."

Fifty-one literary sources were selected. The review was divided into the following themes: (1) limitations of the patient decision-making process in conventional medicine; (2) participation of native North American patients in healthcare decisions; (3) towards a feminist approach to breast cancer; and (4) towards a feminist theory of breast cancer.

This article discusses the importance of a feminist approach to the decision-making process for treatment of patients with breast cancer. As the literature suggests, the needs of minority patients are not completely fulfilled in Western medical culture. Introducing feminist theory into evidence-based medicine will help patients to be better informed about treatment choices and will assist them to select treatment according to their own beliefs and values.

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