

## The nutrition support needs of cancer survivors in Ireland

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#### Introduction

Cancer patients and survivors face several challenges relating to diet including misinformation about diet and cancer and a reported lack of availability of professional dietary advice (1). This research aims to investigate the type of nutrition support received, current dietary habits and preferred nutrition support going forward amongst cancer survivors in Ireland.

#### **Methods**

An online survey exploring the nutrition support needs of cancer survivors in Ireland was developed using LimeSurvey. Eligibility criteria included that respondents were: ≥18yrs, living in Ireland, and ≥1 year post primary cancer treatment. To date 76 respondents have completed the survey.

## **Key results**



# **Demographics**

- **89**% (n=68) of respondents were female
- **63**% (n=48) received third level education
- **58**% (*n*=44) were aged between 45 and 64 years



- **74**% (n=56) **Need for nutrition support**
- support since treatment ceased • 65% (n=49) still face dietary issues as a result of cancer

and treatment

have not

received

nutrition



- All (n=20) respondents Dietary advice that received dietary advice were advised to follow a healthy balanced diet
  - 65% (n= 13) advised to avoid sweets/chocolate
  - 55% (n=11) advised to avoid processed meat
  - 25% (n=5) advised to avoid dairy
  - 20% (n=4) advised to avoid red meat



- **Future nutrition support** • **66**% (n=50) found information in the format of books/leaflets useful
  - 88% (n=67) preferred the idea of an interactive online tool for the provision of support

Fig 1: Key results from the nutrition support needs of cancer survivors in Ireland survey

### Conclusion

This research highlights the challenges facing cancer survivors in Ireland and provides useful insight into how nutrition support services could help address their needs.