

Supplemental Table 2. Patient Feedback (all comments such as none or N/A were removed from this table)

Why did you choose to join IM Healthy?
Dr. *** recommended the program, and I thought it would be useful. She is an excellent provider.
To make better lifestyle choices.
To be around people who going thru cancer like me
I wanted to belong to a group that was facilitated by a professional to help with unique issues related to
people who have or have had cancer and that are living life fully.
I was struggling with recovery from chemo and surgery for breast cancer and just wanted to feel "normal" again
For better overall health
IM Healthy provides an opportunity to contact with others who are either cancer survivors or are currently cancer patients. It is a great platform for sharing and for I earning various coping methods when it comes to managing emotions, wellness challenges and the concerns of this population of individuals.
Learn more about developing a healthy lifestyle.
Support of a group, ongoing work on my mind, body health
I have weight issues that contribute to my depression.
To get help and information getting back to a healthy lifestyle after cancer treatment.
It seemed like a good idea to be with other women who had similar health experience
As I was going through my cancer experience, I wanted to live the style of life that would give me less of a chance of cancer coming back.
It's a consistent way to 'check-in' with myself and others. Topics are very appealing.
Great use of time vs commuting to appts.
I received an invitation from one of my best specialists. Additionally, the title of this group caught all my attention and matched with my most important personal goal: Being Healthy.
referred by doctor
For support with eating healthy foods
I wanted to learn more about how I could support my health.
Group interaction and additional coaching on dealing with cancer
The topics were of interest to me, and I want to continue improving my wellbeing.
To learn how to stay healthy to minimize recurrence.
Due to having brain surgery, it was mind changing for me trying to adjust to the changes of not seeing myself the same way anymore. The IM Healthy group is helping me deal with everyday life along with speaking with other patients that have a similar outlook on cancer.
My doctor recommended it and I felt I would benefit from it.
I want to improve my life in nutrition after finishing treatment
Because my treatments had left me feeling fatigued and out of shape.

I wanted to find out ways I could improve my overall health during and after cancer treatment. I liked the idea of having a support group that was smaller and that had professionals (i.e., psychologist, dietician) leading the conversation.

I felt I needed a positive support system with people who were going through a similar experience.

I wanted to change my habits to healthier ones and I didn't know where to start, IM healthy looked like a good option.

To continue my weight loss journey with a support group to hold me accountable for my actions

to help me during my breast cancer diagnosis, surgery, and follow-up.

Please describe any obstacles or challenges you experienced from the virtual group?

Concern for privacy. Tech programs.

It is not as intimate as the in-person groups

My biggest challenge is sometimes trying to fit it in my work schedule.

Occasional issue with some participants internet connections, trouble understanding what they are saying

It is a little harder to connect with the people than when you are all physically present.

I think I'm happier with in person meetings. I can't really feel honest with myself on a zoom call. I can hide my true feelings. Also, this group of ladies felt judgmental.

Maybe I'm not a group person

We only had physical therapy for a while, but I had a hard time with that.

Remembering to log on in a timely manner was my personal challenge with virtual appts. Appreciate all the

reminders via text, emails, MyChart.

Challenges: This is the first time that I had participated in a support group of this kind (focused around Cancer Patients). So, at the beginning it was a little difficult share my thoughts, feelings, fears or questions. My English level was very limited and I was very shy to participate. But Dr. *** and Dr. *** made me feel very confident and this was a double improvement in my life. I could understand my feelings, new knowledge, and strategies. Additionally, I was able to express them. My personal finances are a little bit complicated right now.

Not many. Not the same experience as in person but that's more an impact on feeling instead of outcome

I have experienced no obstacles but the challenges to do better helps me make myself a better person. it teaches me positives and negatives.

I enjoyed the virtual groups. The obstacle that I wish MD Anderson would find a way to overcome is that once I went back to my hometown, that is out of Texas state, I could no longer join the meetings, so I lost that support when I still needed it.

I felt like, as unhealthy as I felt, the topics were too simple and basic for me

I can't really think of any - it was 100% positive for me.

Schedule. I wasn't able to continue after going back to work.

The only challenge I really experienced was remembering where to go to find the sign on link.

**Do you see any positive changes to your lifestyle due to the group?
If so, what/how?**

I think added a better prospective on cancer and cancer treatment. Good coping skills.

I think it is the same; nothing positive, but nothing negative either.

Yes, learning how to rest and look at life and things in a positive way

Yes. it helps to have a reinforcing entity to keep going in a direction that is helpful especially when I get discouraged. It keeps me on track by helping me to stay present.

Absolutely! I not only started feeling stronger physically (walking longer, working out etc.) but the biggest impact was on an emotional level. I felt more whole again, and actually began to appreciate the strength it takes on a physical and emotional level to recover from cancer.

Yes, ate better, exercised more

YES!!! I am much better at managing stress and anxiety. I still have challenges, but because of the things I've learned by participating in IMH, I am better!

It reinforced how to plan meals and nutrition at home and on the go. It also strengthened the strategies presented in Cognitive Behavior for reducing stress and anxiety.

Accountability to myself & the group, paying closer attention to my choices & my thought patterns

I have begun to run and changed my diet.

The cooking and food classes were very helpful about what food to eat and how to prepare it. Hearing how different people were dealing with common issues was helpful

It made me very aware of my diet and what certain behaviors were sidetracking me. I now try to stick to a Mediterranean diet.

Keeps me centered on improving my lifestyle, accepting challenges, setting SMART goals, checking in with many of the same participants week after week.

Every session was so well prepared and developed. My nutrition is better incorporating grains and more veggies. I am doing weight training 3 days/week following all the fundamentals; I walk daily over 10,000 steps and drinking plenty water I am trying to take care of my sleep quality, relaxations and breathing techniques. Among so many things. I am very grateful for all these new learning.

yes. was able to change my diet. great info from group

I'm more mindful about what I choose to eat. I exercise and stay in today.

Yes, ways to manage stress and healthy eating habits.

Good motivation as the others always had stories and ideas or perspectives to share that I could try incorporating to see if they worked for me.

I can't pinpoint them, but it was very helpful to get tips on better sleep, coping with anxiety, food choices, etc.

I absolutely gained a great deal of knowledge to make positive changes in my lifestyle.

I have seen positive changes in my group and me. I'm not as angry and bitter. I'm learning how to enjoy life. I love everyone in my group including Dr. ***.

Yes, I learned about nutrition, about how to approach and deal with situations and feelings. It made me feel less alone as I was able to see that others were going through the same and somethings, I thought I was the only one experience it, I could see other were too and learn if a different approach was better fit for me too. Listen to others' ideas and experiences taught me too

Yes. Especially with the nutrition segment. And Dr. *** explains things so well. I feel I'm in a much better space mentally.

I didn't participate for very long because I didn't feel a connection to the group, so, not really, no.

Yes, I use several of the tools we learned in the IM Healthy program in my everyday life. I really liked the format of it as well. We'd have a topic, Dr. *** would talk a little about it to set the stage, ask us some questions and we'd share from our perspective and then we'd talk about strategies for managing the issue, etc. The combination of support with other survivors and a professional guide/mediator/therapist was really wonderful. That professional could help to redirect or steer things in the right direction if the group got "off course" as well.

Yes. I've learned I am not the only one going through such difficulties. I've learned to be kinder and gentler to myself.

Yes, I got inspired to start a healthier lifestyle

I have become more active since being a part of the group. I have gained a new support group when I need them. They have challenged me to try different things from food to exercise.

I lost my husband in January 2021, and the group in addition to helping me through the breast cancer surgery and following, also helped me through the grief process at the time.

What other benefits have you received from the virtual group?

The virtual group was sort of like a lifestyle coach, holding me accountable for the choices I made.

Meeting people in the classes.

It has been extremely helpful for me to be with a group of people who have a better understanding of a cancer diagnosis that are close, friends or family.

The group has provided me more insight into myself and my past and the difficulties I have faced and the journey I have had so far. I have learned to appreciate my strengths and the group has just empowered me overall

Less loneliness

Excitement and anticipation! IMH gives me something to look forward to. It just feels good to see the people on the zoom call, to share to vent to encourage each other and the instructors are amazing!

Friendship, being less isolated

I got a better understanding of myself.

Seeing how different people are dealing with the same issues. Having the leader explain the issues in a clear way was helpful in identify them.

Great friends and the idea that I was not in this alone.

Not feeling as alone on this cancer path. A biggie. Talking to people who understand. Additionally, to a very positive change in my lifestyle, I learned how to use technology, I could improve my communication skills, and also, was very interesting and nutrition to listen so different opinions from very diverse people (so different ages, races, activities, gender, etc.). For me, was like to come back to school. I really enjoyed take my notes and reviewed them later or do extra research about any recommendation, topic, or advise provided.

less stress

knowing that other people are also dealing with similar challenges

I appreciated hearing from the other members of the IM Healthy the steps they were taking to improve their health and also hearing their challenges helped me to not feel alone in my journey.

It felt good to have a weekly appointment to discuss positive steps/suggestions to improve my well-being.

I appreciate the sense of community and interaction other participants.

I made a lot of new friends. We talk about everything. a lot of time someone has info that has helped me succeed in life.

I made friends that I am still in touch with and see when possible.

I guess the best benefit I learned is that I am in control of how I live from now on. By being positive, eating well and taking care of my mind and body.

Because we addressed some big, common mental/behavioral issues and themes in IM healthy, it freed up time in my one-on-one talk therapy sessions to focus and dig deeper on issues that were specific to me. I think that just boosted my ability to heal and cope during and after treatment because I was able to address a lot of things faster due to the synergy of the two.

Encouragement. Kindness. Empathy. Understanding. Seeing what works for one helps another.

They have introduced me to alternative choices that were available to me. They gave me encouragement to keep trying. We showed each other just trying was a win-win. being able to talk with other members of the group recovering from cancer.

If yes, what are some important differences for you between the in-person versus virtual group?

In-person is more personal and a more comfortable venue.

The biggest difference is the ability to have a more intimate relationship with other members, supported by meeting before or after the group

In-person sessions were interactive sometimes. Some participants built bonding support with session members in the in-person class.

Easier to hear each person speaking, giving & receiving hugs, actually cooking & tasting the recipes, more time for each section (nutrition, exercise, group therapy

I liked the in-person better because you can see everyone there during the discussions.

Group interaction. I basically was one on one with Amy after the pandemic. Before that we met as a group.

Main difference is the few minutes before & after class to chit-chat to get to know people better.

Not as easy to have conversations before or after as you walk to the next appointment or grab a coffee. Feedback on techniques and ease of using handouts takes more work - can't just put notes down on paper.

How is this group different from other social support groups you may have participated in?

Circles around the issues of cancer

Since the group was smaller, it was a little more personal.

Being in virtual class is relaxing you can be on camera or off camera

The structure of the group is appreciated with various topics, and the facilitators are always willing to adjust the content of the topic to suit and fit in with the needs of the group. The group is both didactic and experiential. I am able to take the information that is presented and learned from the group and apply it to my daily living.

The members of this group seem to be more raw and vulnerable and appreciate the strength being vulnerable takes. The members appreciate everyone's cancer journey and the support we give each other feels more complete because of the knowledge of what it can mean to be fighting cancer

I've never been in other groups

It offers a more relaxing environment. Instructors are very personable and engaging.

The moderator created a relaxed environment that encouraged the participants to express their feelings, opinions and ask questions.

Topic oriented with group input regarding the topic versus individual issues and input from the group regarding the personal issues of the participants that they are working on. Dive deeper into personal issues rather than a new topic each week

It is more targeted

I liked having the written outlines to follow in the discussions and taking notes.

Haven't been in other support groups

It focuses more on how our life choices are affecting our health

Main difference is shared diagnosis of cancer

This is a very proactive group. This group has a clear purpose and a strategy to reach it. Another support groups just focus on emotional situations and, according to my personality, this just make me feel sad and hopeless, instead of giving me the clues to follow to overcome any difficulty or situation. I liked the format very much.

We all have a disease in common

I like that the group was led by a psychologist that works specifically with cancer survivors.

More focused on techniques versus stories from the group.

I really enjoyed that they had a set topic around health. Other cancer-related support groups allow for more of a free-flow discussion while this one focused on concrete health suggestions/discussion.

This the first support group I've participated in. however, it exceeded my expectations.

The atmosphere the group gives out is outstanding. The caring, loving and understanding is just awesome!

We shared the Cancer experience; we understood each other when talking about things that people that had not experience it themselves cannot understand or even imagine.

This is the only support group I have been in that is addressing my issues which are my physical health and the mentality to learn to cope with it.

It follows a definite, talking points progression

It had different leader/moderators each time

Again, having that leader/professional there to guide the conversation makes it more productive, safe and healthy.

It has individuals who have gone or are going through cancer and rather than just talking about what we are going through or enduring the leader gives us a specific topic to work on which is very positive and helpful.

It is part of MD Anderson, so there is a better understanding of what people are going thru after being diagnosed.

This group feels like family. We can voice what we feel to each other without judgement. We each encourage one another and check on each other if we don't see you. We are like the Marines, "no man left behind". They have challenged me to try new foods and alternative exercises. They have even suggested modifications on diets and exercises. Again, we are a family

I attended a grief share support group at the same time and found the IM Healthy Group allowed me to attend virtually and also had one-on-one when I needed it. The grief share program did not meet my expectations.

Any suggestions for future IM Healthy groups?

Keep doing what you are doing.

Perhaps to have more of them.

Sometimes, if it would be possible, would be nice to have groups segregated by gender, age, and type of cancer. With that being said, it certainly is useful to hear from people of all ages, genders and different types of cancer!

I love having the ability to have remote sessions but would also love to go back to the in-person sessions. The intimacy and comradery an in-person session offers is just not matched in the remote sessions

More stress reduction strategies.

Would prefer meeting with the group each week and having a separate time for nutrition & exercise. I don't care for 2 weeks out of every 4 weeks dedicated to nutrition & exercise.

Keep up the good work!

The food and cooking classes are always good. Maybe a discussion on the Living Cancer Free book.

Smaller group might be easier to relate to others.

Mental, nutrition, and exercise are what I've come to expect from group. I believe these topics are being thoroughly explored. Only suggestion is to continue.

Health it is a never-ending topic, so, my suggestion is to continue with all the state of art related with cancer prevention and longevity. Maybe could be nice have occasionally guest (specialists) to share their knowledge.

Need an option for out of State people

Just to listen and ask questions no matter how dumb you may think they are.

I wish the price was more affordable. \$35 a week copay takes a bigger cut of my budget on a limited income.

I don't know how you could get the group to gel into a more cohesive group, maybe offering yoga or stretching sessions.

This is a big one - I REALLY WISH I could do this program from any state. I moved and now I can no longer participate. There are not good integrative medicine departments at the healthcare facilities near me now and that's been super disappointing and sad.

Keep it going!!

I liked us having the online messaging app for the group. That gave us an avenue to talk to one another or just vent 24-7. We also did the Boot Walk as a team. And that was a great way for us to team build and keep up with the exercising. Since then, we have continued to find group activities that provide exercise opportunities.

Anything else you would like to share?

Prefer in person

I enjoy the classes and the instructor

The holistic approach to helping is very much appreciated. It is very affirming to belong to a group that has a body, mind, spirit integration.

I cannot thank everyone that has made IM Healthy available enough. I started thinking I was going to get some help with eating healthier and exercising but the impact on my entire emotional wellbeing has been a very powerful and positive one!

Even though I am not always able to make it on the call, this group has become a lifeline, a space where I can be completely open and forthcoming and the best thing is, the others on the call understand.

I am glad that it was developed during the pandemic. It was a helpful social/educational resource.

It is a very good and helpful program.

I had to stop because my mom fell ill, but I was stressed attending this group. I didn't feel I could be myself. I didn't feel I could be cheery

The staff is professional, responsive, and compassionate. I feel fortunate to be able to participate.

My cancer experience shocked my life. This group was a very powerful tool to overcome many of my personal challenges. IM HEALTHY provided me all the tools that helping me to turn this impact into a positive experience. I really like the virtual format, made me feel accompanied and very supported in the most difficult moments of my recovery.

I like the quick response through text. I am limited on my time due to work and care giving

Really miss being able to join based on residency issues. I do notice the negative impact of not being connected to the group.

Questions 4-6 are unclear to me... is it, how I would rate my success solely based on participating in the IM Healthy sessions? For me, they don't happen in a vacuum. I could answer those questions more precisely if combined with #3: if you answer "yes" to 3, follow-up with 4-6. In any case, I really enjoyed the sessions and found them very positive and helpful. THANK YOU!

Both doctors do a wonderful job facilitating the group.

Dr Katherine is such a great individual. She is very compassionate in what she does. The love she has for patients is overwhelming. I couldn't ask for a better doctor.

I want to say thank you to Dr *** and recognize the amazing job she does not only on this group but in the individual consultations I had with her as well. Her guidance made a significant difference for me and truly help me through it. I learned tools and learned a lot on how to deal not only on this specific situation but others as well.

This was quite an awakening for me. When I was first diagnosed all I thought was ME. This support group made me realize I am not alone. There are more people on the same path. But just as many are also involved in helping us and caring for us. Thank you for all you do.

I'm glad you offer the nutrition meetings free of charge. They have really benefited me and I've learned so much - I would like to continue those.

I'll echo what I said above - allowing others outside Texas to participate virtually real-time would be such a huge improvement. And it's so needed. Even just having short recordings of the lesson and strategies for coping could be so helpful. Example stories could be mixed in from the real sessions but with different names so things were anonymous.

Yes. I have so much praise and thankfulness for Dr. ***. She is an amazing human being and extremely talented to help those in such dire needs. She has been a true lifeline for me and am so grateful for her help in my recovery.

I have thoroughly enjoyed this program. I really appreciate the care that was taken to group us together. I have new friends for life. I like the fact that we all have experienced some form of cancer, but we have different diagnoses. From that aspect we have learned the unique characteristics of cancer. We also could talk about fears, hopes, and wishes to our own unique nonjudgmental cheering squad. This provides peer support that I needed. Thanks for such a good program and please keep it going. Thanks for including me. And I do not mind my responses being published.

Dr. *** is a great moderator for these groups.