

Sleep in Young Women with Breast Cancer: A Narrative Review

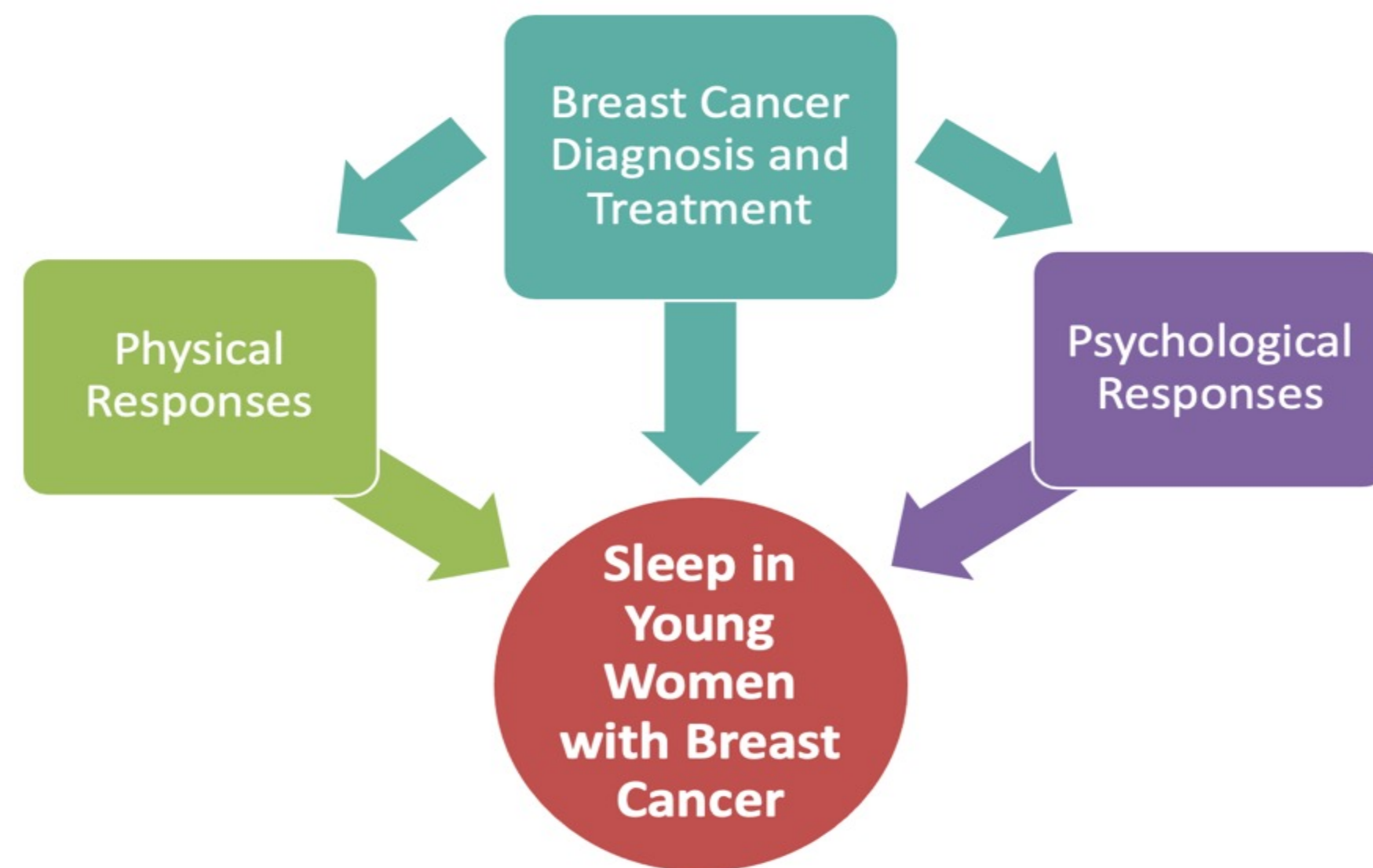
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INTRODUCTION

- Young women with Breast Cancer (YWBC) are a unique subgroup of breast cancer survivors.
- The context of YWBC's developmental stage in life can contribute to psychosocial stress during the breast cancer experience.
- Sleep disturbance is a common distressing symptom in cancer survivors.
- There is a gap in the literature on the synthesis of evidence on sleep in YWBC.

OBJECTIVES



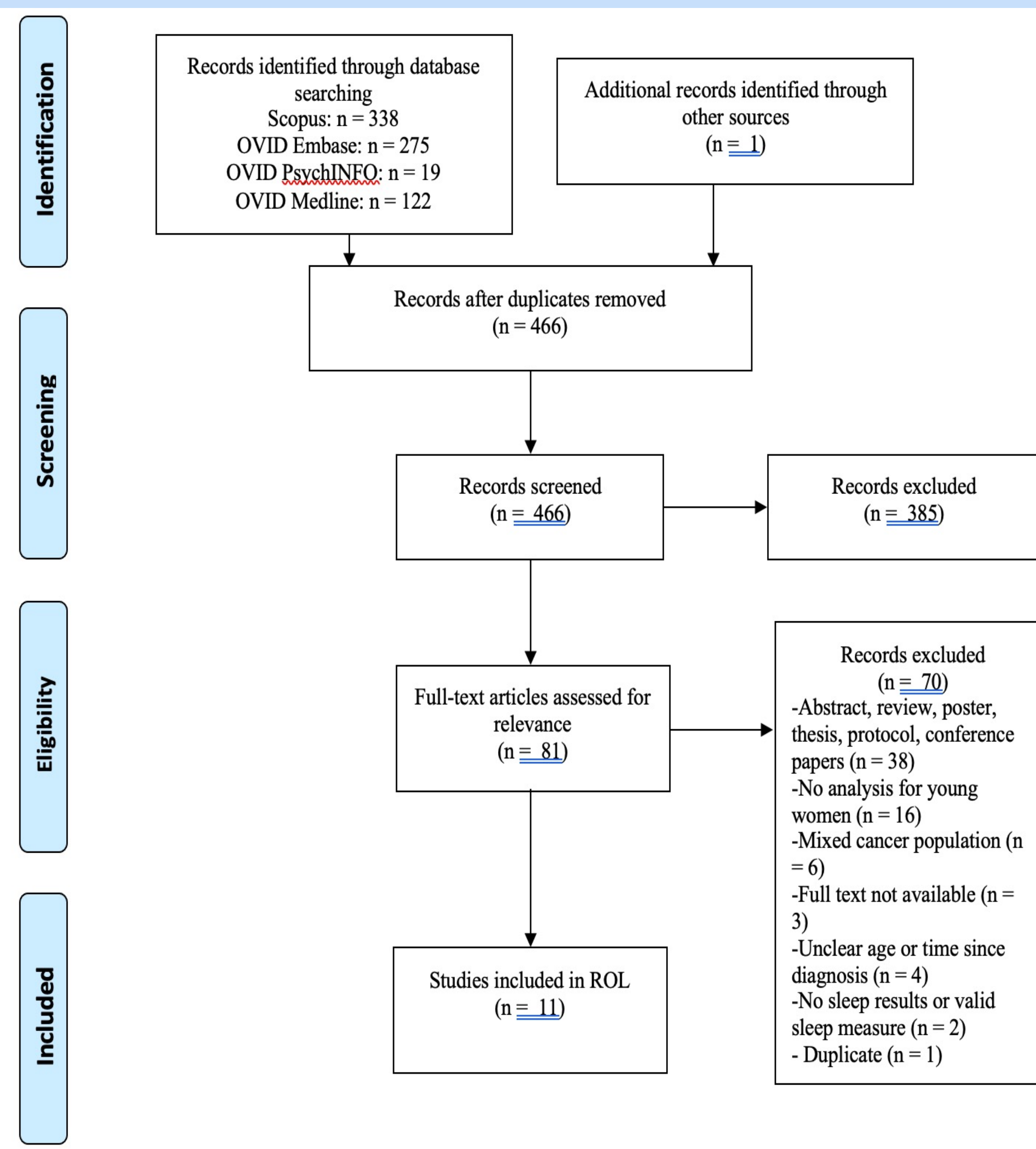
The review aims to:

- Synthesize the sleep literature in YWBC;
- Discuss physical and psychological responses to breast cancer that may affect sleep; and
- Highlight gaps in our knowledge and need for interventions to improve sleep outcomes in YWBC

METHODS

We searched OVID Medline, OVID PsycINFO, OVID Embase, and Scopus and managed references using Covidence, a web-based reference manager.

Key Search Terms: breast cancer, young OR younger OR premenopausal, and sleep OR sleep disturbance OR insomnia OR sleep problems OR sleep deficiency



RESULTS

- 11 studies reviewed; sample was early stage breast cancer, majority < 50 years of age
- Valid sleep measures: Pittsburgh Sleep Quality Index, Insomnia Severity Index, Medical Outcome Study Sleep Scale
- Sleep disturbance occurs before, during, and after cancer treatment.
- After treatment, YWBC had worse sleep disturbance compared to older women with breast cancer and younger women with other cancer types.
- Psychological and physical symptoms, sociodemographic and clinical factors contributed to sleep disturbance.

CONCLUSIONS & IMPLICATIONS

- Sleep disturbance in YWBC is a significant problem which persists after treatment.
- Due to measurement variability across studies, specific aspects of sleep disturbance have not been defined.
- The context of life and coping with the breast cancer experience in YWBC needs further exploration related to sleep health.
- Longitudinal study designs and multi-method sleep measures are needed as a foundation to design targeted interventions.
- Routine survivorship visits should incorporate assessment of sleep disturbance.