



Sexual quality of life two years after Head and Neck cancer diagnosis

Loriguet Léa 1, Almont Thierry 2, Iacob Mariana 3, Anane Soumya 1, Huyghe Eric 4
 1 Centre intercommunal de Creteil
 2 Centre Hospitalier Universitaire de la Martinique
 3 Institut Gustave Roussy
 4 CHU Toulouse

Keywords

Sexuality
 Head and Neck cancer
 Quality of life

REFERENCES

Low C, et al. Issues of intimacy and sexual dysfunction following major head and neck cancer treatment. Oral Oncol. 2009 Oct;45

Rhoten BA, et al. Priorities and Preferences of Patients With Head and Neck Cancer for Discussing and Receiving Information About Sexuality and Perception of Self-Report Measures. J Sex Med. 2020 Aug;17

Rhoten BA. Head and Neck Cancer and Sexuality: A Review of the Literature. Cancer Nurs. 2016 Jul-Aug;39

INTRODUCTION

- Head and neck cancers and their treatments can impact a patient's sexuality and body image.
- Patients need information about this problematic.
- Healthcare providers often fail to distribute information regarding this particular and sensitive issue.

OBJECTIVES

- To evaluate the sexual quality of life in patients 2 years after a diagnostic of a head and neck cancer.
- To determine clinical factors associated with sexual or body image disorders.
- To identify the information received from the healthcare providers.

METHODS

- Design: Retrospective and transversal study.
- Patients:
 - Head and Neck cancers among the 4349 patients from the « ViCAN 2 » study
 - 18-85 years of age.
- Analysis started 2 years after the initial diagnosis about:
 - marital status
 - libido
 - frequency and satisfaction of sexual act
 - medical information received on the subject.
- Interrogation was conducted by phone call or by filling a questionnaire.

RESULTS

- 284 patients were included:
 - median age of 55 years
 - 230 males, 54 females.

	Males	Females	p
	N=230(%)	N=54(%)	
Age	55.4 ± 11.0	54.0 ± 13.8	
Age ≥ 60 years	78 (34.0)	16 (30.0)	.547
Depressive state	19 (8.2)	8 (14.8)	.271
Currently in a relationship	155 (65.7)	36 (66.7)	.942
In a relationship before cancer	173 (75.2)	39 (76.0)	.650
No divorce	150 (65.3)	34 (62.9)	.740

Table 1: Patient characteristics

- Treatment regimen was varied among the participants:
 - 72 % males and 59% females have undergone surgical resection
 - 70% patients had radiotherapy
 - 50% chemotherapy.

	Males	Females	p
	N=230(%)	N=54(%)	
Medical information received on the subject	18 (7.8)	3 (5.5)	.774
Communication about sexuality			
N/C	0 (0.0)	1 (1.8)	
Yes, initiative of healthcare	3 (1.3)	1 (1.8)	
Yes, on my initiative	15 (6.6)	2 (3.7)	
No information received	125 (54.3)	26 (48.1)	
No, don't need information	59 (25.6)	16 (29.6)	

Table 2: Medical information received on the patients

- Women reported higher scores for satisfaction with sexual frequency than men.

	Males	Females	p
	N=230(%)	N=54(%)	
Decreased libido	92 (49.0)	26 (48.1)	.087
Satisfaction of sexual act and intimacy	105 (45.7)	22 (40.7)	.545
Decreased frequency of sexual act	89 (38.7)	21 (38.8)	.562
Satisfaction of frequency sexual act	86 (37.4)	23 (42.6)	.048
Sexual act within 15 days	96 (41.7)	20 (37.0)	.957

Table 3: Sexual quality of life

CONCLUSION

- There are few data on sexuality in head and neck cancer patients.
- They are just as affected as other cancer patients and need detailed information on these specific issues.
- The information about the impact of cancer on sexuality should come from healthcare professionals.
- The latter should be better trained in this field to improve the quality of the medical act and ensure a holistic perspective.