

The loss of femininity and problems in family life in patients with breast cancer after mastectomy.

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Abstract

Statement of the Problem: Women often have problems in family relationships after mastectomy. Women associate them with the loss of femininity after mastectomy.

Methodology & Theoretical Orientation: We monitored 63 married couples for 5 years after mastectomy in a woman. They were married for 15-20 years before the mastectomy. Each married couple had conflicting situations in their lives, but at the time of inclusion in the study, no one had reported plans for divorce. Before the operation and after the mastectomy, the husbands of all these women were offered a rational psychotherapy session where the psychiatrist worked with the oncologist to talk about the problems that may arise in the family and ways to overcome them. Only 29 husbands agreed to attend this therapy. During the annual check-ups with an oncologist, women talked about family relationships and filled out a Scale of Subjective Evaluation of Family Relationships. Women who including in the study were conditionally divided into two groups of women whose husbands attended the proposed rational therapy in the first group (n=29) and whose husbands refused rational therapy in the second group (n=34).

Findings: For various reasons (husband's death, woman's death, moving to another city), 9 women from the first group and 11 women from the second group could not complete the study. None of the 20 women in the first group who completed the study were divorced. And in the annual completion of the Scale of Subjective Evaluation of Family Relationships, women in this group reported that their husbands took more care of them and paid more attention than before the mastectomy. In the second group of 23 women who completed the study, 10 women remained married after 5 years. All women in the second group in the annual completion of the Scale of Subjective Evaluation of Family Relationships noted the cooling of the family relations one year after the operation. Within 2 years after the operation, 13 women in the second group divorced. The reason for the divorce was the cooling of feelings on the part of the husband.

Conclusion & Significance:

Apparently, husbands who had undergone rational psychotherapy initially had a warmer relationship with their wives and wanted to understand how to help them and did everything to do so, and maintained these relationships for the next 5 years.



Biography:

Sushko Vyacheslav had Membership in professional and scientific societies: World Psychiatric Association; Association European Psychiatrists; European College of Neuropsychopharmacology; International Society for Prevention of Child Abuse and Neglect; Ukrainian Society of Psychiatrists and Narcologist; Odessa Regional Scientific Society of Psychiatrists; Odessa Regional Association of Psychiatrists.

Nestor Consultants, Inc. (founded 1985 by Dr. Lindsey), is the primary consulting organization for the work which he performs providing these and related services since 1976.

Speaker Publications:

1. García Arroyo JM, Domínguez López ML. Fundamentos de la psicoterapia con mujeres afectadas de cáncer de mama. *Alcmeon*. 2009;16(2):125–139.
2. García Arroyo JM, Domínguez López ML. Por dónde seguir investigando en psicopatología?



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2010;1(199):39–56.

3. García Arroyo JM, Domínguez López ML. Reacciones psicológicas de la mujer ante el diagnóstico de cáncer de mama. *Anales de Psiquiatría.* 2009;25(6):287–294.
4. Keith DJW, Walker MB, Walker LG, et al. Women who wish breast reconstruction: characteristics, fears, and hopes. *Plastic and Reconstructive Surgery.* 2003;111(3):1051–1056.
5. Hopwood P, Maguire GP. Body image problems in cancer patients. *British Journal of Psychiatry.* 1988;153(supplement 2):47–50.

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