

P03-10 - PSYCHOLOGICAL IMPACT OF CHEMOTHERAPY INDUCED ALOPECIA

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Objectives: The aim of this work was:

- to understand and measure the emotional effects of chemotherapy-induced alopecia by exploring self-esteem, body image, anxiety and depression in cancer patients
- to analyse the strategies used to cope with hair loss.

Methods: This was a cross-sectional study. It involved the use of a questionnaire with patients from the medical oncology unit of the Habib Bourguiba University Hospital. The questionnaire included Socio-demographic data, type and stage of cancer, data concerning the alopecia (partial or total) and its impact on social life, work, and sexuality.

Four measurement scales were used:

- Rosenberg's Self-Esteem scale,
- Bruchon-Schweitzer's Body image questionnaire (QIC)
- Hospital Anxiety and Depression scale (HAD)
- Brief cope

Results: Preliminary study

It was a population of 24 patients. 55.2% were males. The mean age was 45.9 years. 75.9% were married.

Alopecia was the most distressing side effect of chemotherapy in 30.4% of cases. 45.8% were suffering from the stigma of the alopecia which disturbed their social interaction. It led to a loss in self-confidence in half of patients and altered sexuality in third. Self-esteem was low in 34.5%.

The average score of the scale body image was 61. 41.4% of patients were anxious and only 27.6% were depressed.

The religion was the major strategy used to cope with alopecia.

Conclusion: The findings suggest that the chemotherapy-induced alopecia has the potential to affect various aspects of patient's life, but Tunisian cancer patients seems to be less affected compared with literature.