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Depression and Men's Quality of Sexual Life After Prostatectomy for Prostate Cancer

E. Wojtyna¹, A. Wiszniewicz²

¹Institute of Psychology, University of Silesia, Katowice, Poland ; ²Cordis, Hospicy, Katowice, Poland

Background. Treatment – both surgical and hormonal - significantly impairs the sexual function of men. Subsequently, the patients are at risk of adaptation disorders, including depression, in response to the cancer. Depression and severe chronic stress are other factors impairing sexual functioning.

Aim. The aim of this study was to determine the relationship between depression and men's quality of sexual life after prostatectomy for prostate cancer.

Methods. The study was cross-sectional and involved 112 men diagnosed with prostate cancer after prostatectomy. The study used questionnaires: the EORTC, QLQ-C30 with PR25 module, the Distress Thermometer, Sexual Life Satisfaction Questionnaire and the Beck Depression Inventory.

Results . The level of depression in the study group was quite high (M = 27.20). The study showed a negative correlation between depressiveness and quality of life in all its dimensions. There was also a negative correlation between satisfaction of sexual functioning and distress, depression and quality of life in other dimensions. Those highly evaluating the possibility of relaxed conversation with partner about sex and satisfied with the frequency of extragenital caresses had lower severity of depression.

Conclusions. Psychoeducation about extragenital forms of sexual activity and also on the communication needs between partners can be an important factor in increasing the quality of life and reducing the risk of depression in patients with prostate cancer.