Sexual functioning after mastectomy surgery- A qualitative study

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Abstract

Background: In many cultures, breast is a symbols of femininity, motherhood, beauty and sexual attractiveness that loss and deformity it’s may lead to negative effect on sexual life. Objective: The objective of present study is to understand sexual function after mastectomy surgery in breast cancer survivors.

Methods: This study has a qualitative design. Semi-structured interview have been conducted with 11 Iranian women surviving breast cancer to explore their view on sexual function after mastectomy.

Results: average age of participants and husbands was 44.5±4.9 and 47.8±5.2 respectively. Average time between surgery and interview was 2.8(rang: 1-7 years). Analysis using the Colaizzi method reveals four major themes: (1) dyspareunia, (2) hesitation in resuming sex after mastectomy surgery, (3) decrease of frequency and quality of sex, and (4) sexual considerateness.

Conclusion: This study shows changes of sexual function after mastectomy surgery. In addition, understanding and cognition of sexual life among breast cancer survivors help to improve survivors’ sexual wellbeing. The finding this study helps to mental healthcare professionals to design appropriate interventions in order to improve survivors’ sexual life.

Keywords: breast cancer, mastectomy, sexual function, qualitative study, Colaizzi method.