Original Article

Effect of Acceptance and Commitment Therapy on Sexual Desire in Women with Breast Cancer after Mastectomy

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Abstract

Introduction: The effects of breast cancer and mastectomy on sexuality, an important aspect of personality, emphasize the need for psychological treatments. The purpose of this study was to investigate the effectiveness of acceptance and commitment therapy (ACT) on sexual desire in breast cancer patients after mastectomy.

Methods: This was a semiexperimental study with an experimental and a control group with a pretest-posttest design. The statistical population included all women with breast cancer in the Isfahan province who had come to Alla charity center in 2017. A sample of 26 women with breast cancer was selected through available sampling and assigned randomly to two groups of 13 subjects each. The experimental group received ACT over 8 sessions and the control group remained on the waiting list until the end of the study. The measurement tool was the Hurlbert Index of Sexual Desire administered before and after the intervention. Data were analyzed with SPSS 16 using an analysis of covariance test.

Results: There was a significant difference in the mean scores on sexual desire between the two groups (F= 7.99, p=0.014). The mean score on sexual desire improved from 0.85 to 1.23 in the treatment group, but there was no change in the control group (1.17 in the pretest vs 1.16 in the posttest). In general, ACT was effective in improving sexual desire in patients (p < 0.05, effect size: 0.48).

Conclusion: In general, according to the findings of this research, ACT seems to be effective in improving psychological problems in women with breast cancer.

Keywords: Acceptance and Commitment Therapy, Sexual Desire, Breast Cancer, Mastectomy