ORIGINAL ARTICLE

Iranian Quarterly Journal of Breast Disease 2018; 11(2):46.

The Comparison of Sexual Satisfaction and Body Image between Women with Breast Cancer after Treatment and Healthy Middle-Aged Women: A Cross-Sectional Study

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[Downloaded from ijbd.ir on 2026-10-13]

[DOR: 20.1001.1.17359406.1397.11.2.2.0]

[DOI: 10.30699/acadpub.ijbd..11.2.46]

Abstract

Introduction: In Iran, many of the women with breast cancer complain of communication problems with their spouses after diagnosis and treatment. One of the most important issues in this area is reducing their psychological problems and improving their quality of life. The present study was conducted to compare sexual satisfaction and body image between women with breast cancer after treatment and healthy women.

Methods: This was a cross-sectional descriptive study. A total of 146 women, aged < 50 years, were selected by convenience sampling from healthy women (n = 73) and women with breast cancer after treatment (n = 73) who were referred to the Breast Disease Clinic of Motamed Cancer Institute, Tehran, Iran. The Sexual Satisfaction Scale for Women (SSSW) and Body Image Concern Inventory (BICI) were used for data collection.

Results: The mean sexual satisfaction score for the women was significantly higher than that for the breast cancer patients (102.06 ± 17.06 vs 80.6 ± 20.97, $p < 0.001$). Also, healthy women had fewer body image concerns compared with the patients (37.85 ± 10.85 vs 46.11 ± 16.99, $p < 0.001$). The difference between the groups was significant for each component of the variables ($p < 0.05$).

Conclusion: Breast cancer survivors have a lower sexual satisfaction and more body image concerns compared with healthy women. These results show the importance of providing counseling for these patients to improve their quality of life.

Keywords: Breast Cancer, Sexual Satisfaction, Body Image, Cross-sectional study