

17th World Congress of the Academy of Human Reproduction

*15–18 March 2017
Rome, Italy*

TITLE

THE IMPACT OF CANCER RELATED INFERTILITY ON YOUNG WOMENS PERSONAL LIFE

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ABSTRACT

Context: Cancer diagnosis in young patients has increased with time, but so has the survival rate. The treatment regimens have developed, new techniques have appeared, but the non-malignant short and long term complications are still affecting survivor's quality of life. Personal life is influenced not only by a diagnosis, even if that is cancer, but also by a long term complication as is infertility.

Methods and patients: This research has started in 2014 and held within the Obstetrics and Gynecology Department of "Nicolae Malaxa" Clinical Hospital, Bucharest, Romania. It includes a number of 38 patients which are in follow-up after different types of cancer and currently diagnosed with infertility. Patients were gynecological examined, biological samples were taken to evaluate the ovarian function and they were asked to complete a questionnaire regarding intimacy and personal life.

Results: The analysis of the data revealed mild to severe genitourinary syndrome related to cancer treatment, followed by mostly partial recovery of the genital mucosa with the administration of oral or topical hormones, or alternative therapies when hormones were not indicated. Intimacy and sexual activity was found reduced compared to before cancer, two thirds of women being in a stable relationship. Personal life was reported to be affected by genital damage related to cancer treatment, decreased self-esteem following therapy and related complications, while infertility and its long time side effects and related family issues is particularly involved in decreased quality of life.

Conclusions: Cancer diagnosis and treatment are more likely to produce deep and complex changes in both physical and psychological levels. The lack of self-esteem and intimacy during the treatment is frequently prolonged alter, leading to serious and, often, irreversible damage to women's personal life.

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