

Evaluating Family Functioning and Spiritual Health in Women with Breast Cancer, Cancer-Treated and Healthy Women

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Abstract

Introduction: Family by sharing common beliefs helps its members to deal with critical situations and have a positive outlook in mind. In line with the important function of a family in coping with problems, people's spiritual orientation also plays a decisive role in the acceptance of the problems and compatibility with them. This study aimed to compare the performance of family and spiritual health in women with the breast cancer, breast cancer-treated women and their healthy counterparts.

Methods: In this case-control study, 50 women with breast cancer, 50 breast cancer-treated women and 50 healthy women were selected by purposeful sampling from Shohadaye Tajrish Hospital in Tehran and were compared in terms of spiritual well-being and family functioning. The data collection tool was a questionnaire of spiritual health and family functions. The data were analyzed using multivariate analysis of variance by the SPSS 22 software.

Results: Results showed that components of problem solving, communication and roles in the variables of family function, existential well-being and the total score of spiritual well-being of women under the breast cancer treatment were significantly lower than the other two groups of women stopping the treatment and the healthy women ($P < 0.05$). Also, there was a significant difference between the scores of women with the breast cancer and those who had treated; scores in the components of religious health and the total score of spiritual health were lower in women under the treatment compared to the other two groups ($P < 0.05$). There was only a significant difference in the spiritual health between the treated women and healthy ones; the treated women had a lower score in spiritual health compared to the healthy women.

Conclusions: The family function and spiritual health directly and indirectly affects the mental health of patients with breast cancer and the process of physical recovery. According to these findings, providing family-therapeutic and spiritual therapy-based interventions to improve family function and increase spiritual well-being is among the research priorities.

Keywords: Spiritual Health, Family Function, Chemotherapy, Breast Cancer