

Abstract

The diploma thesis “Psychological aspects of coping with a serious somatic disease: women diagnosed with cervical cancer” deals with psychological demands of the adaptation to the oncological disease with focus on specifics of the cervical cancer diagnosis.

The theoretical part first introduces specifics of cervical cancer with consideration of patients’ experience and then provides the issue of coping with the oncological disease in terms of coping and defense mechanisms. Then it elaborates the psychological adaptation to cancer disease with focus on other aspects linked to society, patients and disease altogether with problems in coping with oncological diagnosis. The theoretical part of the study is concluded with the description of demands and patients’ experience in each clinical stage of the disease.

The empirical part describes supporting psychological and other aspects, which help women to cope with cervical cancer. It also pays attention to the change of these aspects and needs with regard to clinical stage of the disease (treatment, remission and relapse) and specific demographic data (age, children, size of residence, partnership). It is also focused on those of supporting aspects, which are appreciated or missed by the patients within the treating team (doctors and other medical staff).

The survey includes 12 individual in-depth interviews with patients diagnosed with cervical cancer. According to triangulation, the qualitative methodology is complemented by a Visual analog scale of coping with cancer.

Based on qualitative mapping probe, we have identified two key aspects, which help women to cope with the diagnosis of cervical cancer - social support and active coping strategy. Then the mutual communication (the process of getting information, explanation, encouragement) and creating good relationships (cooperative coalition) seem to have supporting quality in contact with the treating medical team.

Key Words

coping with cancer, psychological adaptation, cervical cancer, oncological disease, coping strategies