

I. ABSTRACT

The incidence and mortality rate of breast cancer is a global problem. All over the world, cancer is associated with suffering, pain, anger, lifestyle changes and the inherent fear for one's own health and life. Disturbances in the body image are associated with a significant impairment of psychosocial functioning and a significantly lower quality of life. People struggling with body image problems often have significantly poorer mental health, emotional well-being, social functioning, and a general deterioration in quality of life compared to the general population. After breast removal, women begin to perceive their bodies differently than before the mastectomy and their sphere of functioning in everyday life changes. Each patient reacts individually to the diagnosis of the disease and it mainly depends on the personality traits and the developed defense mechanisms. The attitude towards the disease affects the quality of life as well as the treatment outcome. People accepting their illness more often fight for recovery and experience less negative emotions. Adaptation to the disease largely results from coping with the disease, and its consequences are changes in their quality of life.

The main aim of the study was to assess the occurrence of disorders in the body image in women after surgical removal of the breast, affiliated to the Amazon clubs in Suwałki, Białystok and Warsaw in the context of their quality of life, acceptance of the disease and life satisfaction.

The study was completely voluntary and anonymous, the participants were informed about its goals. It was carried out in the period from February 2018 to June 2019. The study group consisted of 454 women after mastectomy.

The research method was a diagnostic survey with the use of standardized tools. In order to verify the hypotheses, the following research tools were used: the shortened version of the Quality of Life Scale, the Body Assessment Scale, the Life Satisfaction Scale, the Disease Acceptance Scale and the survey questionnaire containing sociodemographic data of patients created for the purposes of the study. The obtained data were subjected to statistical analysis. The calculations were performed using the statistical package STATISTICA 10.0 and Microsoft Excel 2000 (Microsoft Corporation). The test results for which the significance level was lower than or equal to 0.05 were considered statistically significant. The following tests were used in the calculations: median and Kruskal-Wallis, U Mann-Whitney, chi-square independence.

The results of the research on the quality of life more and more often pay attention to the feelings of patients, without disregarding their needs. The interpersonal team does not treat the patient subjectively, but more often involves them in the treatment process. The undertaken research on the quality of life makes it possible to get to know and evaluate the subjective symptoms of the disease, while striving to improve the quality of medical services provided. The obtained results of own research are intended to assess the quality of life of Amazons living in completely different cities and help them to determine the similarities and differences in individual spheres of life affecting their QoL. Own research showed that the overall quality of life (question 1) was assessed on average in Suwałki and Białystok, and well in Warsaw. Health assessment (question 2) was also assessed on average in Suwałki and Białystok, while the ladies living in Warsaw rated it well. In the group of respondents from all cities, the environmental sphere was rated the highest, and the social sphere - the lowest. It has been shown that among the Amazons there has been a reduction in the quality of life in all its domains, i.e. physical, mental, social and environmental.

An additional advantage of these tests is the possibility of diagnosing satisfaction and acceptance of the disease, thanks to which it will be possible to develop effective and adequate programs aimed at improving the quality of life and eliminating the occurrence of disturbances in the body image. The results of the research showed that among the respondents from Suwałki, Białystok and Warsaw there are disorders in their own breasts, body shape, sexual drive and sexual activity.

Based on my research, it can be concluded that the respondents show:

- Women associated in the Amazon clubs in Suwałki, Białystok and Warsaw show that they have disturbances in their body image and the appearance of their deformed body has significantly influenced their quality of life.
- Amazons from Suwałki assessed their quality of life and health as low, while those from Białystok and Warsaw assessed it as average.
- Women after mastectomy in all analyzed cities had problems with accepting their own disease. Better acceptance of the disease is favored by: family life in the local community, higher earnings, age under 65 and having a breast implant.
- Respondents from Suwałki who took part in the study had low satisfaction with life, from Białystok assessed it at a moderate level, and from Warsaw - good.

- Body image disturbances were more common among Amazons who were single, 65 years of age or older, their monthly gratification was low, and among women who did not have a breast implant.
- The conducted study showed that there is a statistically significant correlation between satisfaction with one's own breasts, sexual activity and drive, and the perceived satisfaction with life. It has also been shown that better self-perception contributes to better acceptance of the disease.
- Adapting to the experienced ailments related to the disease and good acceptance of the disease is associated with a better perception of one's own life, making it more satisfying.
- In each of the Amazon Clubs, it was noticed that good satisfaction with life also had a significant impact on the physical, mental, social and environmental spheres of the respondents.

Key words: body image disorders, quality of life, mastectomy, disease acceptance, life satisfaction