Abstract

Objective. To evaluate the stress level in women who have had mastectomy and analyze the relationship between stress and sociodemographic, clinical, and social support variables. Methodology. Descriptive study carried out at Hospital de Santa Rita de Cássia, Vitória/Espírito Santo (Brazil) among 84 mastectomized women. We used a questionnaire to elicit sociodemographic information and instruments to evaluate stress (Lipp’s Stress Symptom Inventory for Adults) and anxiety (State–Trait Anxiety Inventory). Results. A total of 69% of women had stress. Stress in the exhaustion phase was found in 57% of women, the resistance phase in 39%, alarm in 2%, and the near-exhaustion phase in 2%. Physical symptoms predominated (56%) over psychological symptoms (44%). Only 25% of participants had some type of social support. Of investigated variables, only the relationship of stress with anxiety traits was statistically significant. Conclusion. An important proportion of mastectomized women experienced stress. Nursing follow-up is essential to help these patients deal with the stress associated with breast cancer.

Keywords

Breast neoplasms, mastectomy, stress, psychological, anxiety.