Abstract

The purpose of the present study was to identify and analyze studies in health literature about the psychocultural meanings reported by women who experience urinary incontinence (UI). A bibliographical search was executed in the following databases: Lilacs, Medline, Pubmed and Medscape. The present review showed that studies note several meanings. The articles were grouped in three categories defined as significant: according to age experiences, cultural-religious experiences and experiences in self-care. The studies revealed that the degree of anguish and the range of the difficulties experienced are related both with age, ethnic group or religion and with the perception each individual has of her incontinence, which will lead to different levels of emotional disorders and to seeking (or not seeking) treatment. Besides, barriers regarding self-care are perceived. It is concluded that the UI may cause suffering and incontinent women have difficulties to deal with this problem.

Keywords

Nursing, women's health, urinary incontinence, review literature, psychosocial impact.