

The psychological impact of cervical dysplasia diagnosis on women's quality of life

Introduction: Cervical dysplasia diagnosis carries significant psychological consequences that extend beyond biomedical outcomes. This study examined the relationship between emotional distress, illness perceptions, psychosocial functioning, and quality of life among women diagnosed with cervical dysplasia in a real-world clinical setting.

Methods: A cross-sectional study was conducted at the Institute of Mother and Child in the Republic of Moldova among 84 women diagnosed with cervical dysplasia. Data were collected from 64 participants via a standardized online questionnaire, and an adapted WHOQOL-BREF instrument was administered to a subsample of 16 participants. Descriptive statistics and Spearman correlation analysis were applied.

Results: Diagnosis was associated with considerable psychological distress, including fear, anxiety, uncertainty, cancer-related concerns, and a pronounced need for emotional support. Worries regarding disease progression, future medical procedures, HPV transmission, and inadequate understanding of medical information were commonly reported. Despite these burdens, overall quality of life remained relatively preserved. Mean WHOQOL-BREF scores were highest for social relationships (82.29%), followed by psychological well-being (76.82%), physical health (74.78%), general quality of life (74.22%), and environment (73.70%). Psychological distress was significantly correlated with the perceived impact of the diagnosis on daily functioning (Spearman's $\rho = 0.622$, $p < 0.001$).

Conclusions: Cervical dysplasia affects women primarily through distress-driven disruption of daily life rather than uniform functional decline. Social support and clear medical communication emerged as key protective factors. These findings support the integration of psychosocial screening, counseling, and empathetic communication into routine gynecological care.