

Psychological impact of diagnostic exams

Ana Grilo (a), Filipa Lucena (b), Carla Abreu (c), Paulo Marques (d), Luís Lança (e)

(a) Departamento das Ciências Sociais e Humanas. Escola Superior de Tecnologia da Saúde. Instituto Politécnico de Lisboa. Lisboa, Portugal

(b) Departamento de Ciências e Tecnologias das Radiações e Biossinais da Saúde. Escola Superior de Tecnologia da Saúde. Instituto Politécnico de Lisboa. Lisboa, Portugal

(c) PET Imaging Centre at St Thomas' Hospital. Division of Imaging Sciences. King's College London. London, England

Introduction: Anxiety is a common problem in primary care and specialty medical settings. Treating an anxious patient takes more time and adds stress to staff. Unrecognized anxiety may lead to exam repetition, and impedance of exam performance. Objective: The aim of the study was to examine the anxiety levels of patients who are to undergo diagnostic exams related to cancer diagnostic: PET/CT and mammography. Methods: Two hundred and thirty two patients who undergo PET/CT and one hundred thirteen women who undergo mammography filled out one questionnaire after the procedure to determine their concerns, expectations and perceptions of anxiety. Results: Our results show that the main causes of anxiety in patients who are having a PET/CT is the fear of the procedure itself and fear of the results. Patients who suffered from greater anxiety were those who were scanned during the initial stage of an oncological disease. On the other hand, the diagnostic is the main cause of anxiety in women who are requiring a mammography. 28% of the women reported having experienced pain or intense pain. Conclusions: The performance of diagnostic exams related to cancer diagnostic like a PET/CT and a mammography are important and statistically generators of anxiety. Patients are often poorly informed and present with a range of anxieties that may ultimately affect examination quality. These results provide expertise that can be used in the development of future training programs to integrate post-graduate courses of health professionals.

Descriptors: anxiety; positron emission tomography; mammography; diagnostic; health care professional-patient communication.

(a) ana.grilo@estesl.ipl.pt

(b) filipa.lucena@estesl.ipl.pt

(c) carlafsabreu@gmail.com

(d) pmarques_rd@hotmail.com

(e) luis.lana@estesl.ipl.pt