

## Evaluation of the patient's quality of life by her relative in a breast cancer population

Purpose of the study : to compare quality of life (QoL) of breast cancer patients when QoL is evaluated by the patient herself and by her relative.

Assumption : The QoL of the patient is underestimated by her relative.

Method : The sample is composed of 60 couples divided in two groups : an experimental group (EG) of 30 breast cancer patients and their relative; a control group (CG) of 30 women having no cancer with the same age, school level and number of children that the EG and their relative.

Outcome measures: They completed a socio-demographic inventory, an oncological questionnaire, the State Trait Anxiety Inventory (Spielberger, 1983), the Hospital Anxiety and Depression Scale (HADS, Zigmond et Snaith, 1983), and the Quality of Life Systemic Inventory (QLSI, Dupuis, Perrault, Lambany, Kennedy et David, 1989).

Results : Means and standard deviations of the women from the EG are : STAI ( $37.8 \pm 12.86$ ), HADS ( $7.97 \pm 4.3$ ), QLSI ( $4.89 \pm 3.9$ ); and from the CG are: STAI ( $31.86 \pm 10.81$ ), HADS ( $7.73 \pm 3.17$ ), QLSI ( $3.54 \pm 2.15$ ). When the relatives complete the evaluation for their woman, means and standard deviations are in EG: STAI ( $41.27 \pm 12.39$ ), HADS ( $8.6 \pm 4.3$ ), QLSI ( $3.43 \pm 2.85$ ) and in CG: STAI ( $35.1 \pm 10.6$ ), HADS ( $7.76 \pm 3.47$ ), QLSI ( $3.27 \pm 2.07$ ). Statistically there is no difference among women from EG and women from CG, and when the relatives complete the evaluation for their woman from EG and from CG. Moreover, correlations between breast cancer women and their evaluation by their relative are good (STAI :  $r = .32$ ,  $p = 0.08$  ; HADS :  $r = 0.4$ ,  $p = 0.03$  ; ISQV :  $r = 0.54$ ,  $p = 0.02$ ).

Conclusion : Contrary to the literature, our results do not show an underestimation by the relatives of the breast cancer patients' QoL, but a slight overestimation. Moreover, results of the QoL do not differ significantly between the two women groups (EG/CG). Finally, it seems that relatives are good assessors.