

## Psychosocial needs and perception of inequity: How spouses react to the cancer of their partner?

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**Background.** Several studies have highlighted the importance of psychosocial needs in cancer patients' spouses. Our study's aim was to reduce these spouses' needs, using a combination of two psychotherapeutic methods: 1. Psychosocial needs' organization into a hierarchy; 2. Problem-solving method. We also assessed perception of inequity, which is a new concept used in psycho-oncology. This perception focusses on two feelings that spouses might experience in their relationships: firstly, the feeling of overbenefit and underinvestment; secondly, the feeling of underbenefit and overinvestment.

**Method.** A longitudinal design with three assessments (T0,T1,T2) and two groups (experimental, control) was employed. Spouses fulfilled questionnaires: socio-demographic questionnaire, Psychosocial Needs Inventory, Perception of Inequity, Hospital Anxiety and Depression Scale. At T0, all participants organised their psychosocial needs into a hierarchy. Experimental group practiced problem-solving method before control group. Indeed, experimental group practiced it between T0 and T1 while control group practiced it only between T1 and T2.

**Results.** Thirty-seven spouses participated: N experimental group=19; N control group=18. Whenever the combination was given, repeated measures' ANOVAs highlighted a significant decrease in unsatisfied psychosocial needs when participants have received both methods. Nevertheless, our results did not replicate previous findings according to which spouses experience a higher feeling of overinvestment and underbenefit than feeling of underinvestment and overbenefit.

**Discussion.** Our results underline the interest of proposing psychotherapeutic methods to cancer patients' spouses to reduce unsatisfied psychosocial needs: clinical implications will be further discussed. Moreover, perception of inequity is a significant concept in psycho-oncology which consequences will also be discussed.