

Abstract

The prevalence of anxiety, depression and sexual maladjustments in post myocardial infarction patients: an uncovered aspect of follow-up care

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Background

Sexual life plays an important role in physical and mental well-being of a patient. Sexual maladjustments therefore may be associated with depression and anxiety contributing to poor quality of life.

Objectives

To evaluate the prevalence of sexual maladjustments, anxiety and depression among post myocardial infarction (MI) patients.

Methods

Cross sectional study was conducted at the Cardiology unit, Kandy on a sample of post MI patients with a self-administered questionnaire after ensuring patient confidentiality.

Results

A total of 150 post MI patients with a mean age of 60 years (range: 37-85 years) of which 81% were males, participated in study. The duration following MI ranged from 0.5 to 5 years. Majority (65%) had sexual activity within 12 months prior to the cardiac event. However, only 54% had sexual activity since the MI, of which 53% had less frequency, 14% had the same frequency and 1% had increased frequency of intercourse while 32% refused to answer. Only 16% received instructions on when to resume sexual activity following the MI.

Majority (79%) had no depression. However, 5% had depression and 16% had borderline depression. Most (84%) had no anxiety disorder. However, 14% had borderline anxiety and 2% had anxiety. Prevalence of anxiety ($p=0.397$) or depression ($p=0.99$) had no gender disparity.

Conclusion

Post MI sexual care is a poorly discussed matter. There is a considerable prevalence of borderline depression and anxiety, which need special attention. This study emphasizes the requirement of implementing a cardiac rehabilitation programme in a standard manner to improve safety and quality of life of post MI patients.

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