

## Sexual functioning after mastectomy surgery- A qualitative study

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### Abstract

**Background:** In many cultures, breast is a symbols of femininity, motherhood, beauty and sexual attractiveness that loss and deformity it's may lead to negative effect on sexual life.

**Objective:** The objective of present study is to understand sexual function after mastectomy surgery in breast cancer survivors.

**Methods:** This study has a qualitative design. Semi-structured interview have been conducted with 11 Iranian women surviving breast cancer to explore their view on sexual function after mastectomy.

**Results:** average age of participants and husbands was  $44.5\pm 4.9$  and  $47.8\pm 5.2$  respectively. Average time between surgery and interview was 2.8(rang: 1-7 years). Analysis using the Colaizzi method reveals four major themes: (1) dyspareunia, (2) hesitation in resuming sex after mastectomy surgery, (3) decrease of frequency and quality of sex, and (4) sexual considerateness.

**Conclusion:** This study shows changes of sexual function after mastectomy surgery. In addition, understanding and cognition of sexual life among breast cancer survivors help to improve survivors` sexual wellbeing. The finding this study helps to mental healthcare professionals to design appropriate interventions in order to improve survivors` sexual life.

**Keywords:** breast cancer, mastectomy, sexual function, qualitative study, Colaizzi method.