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ORIGINAL ARTICLE

“Life without an Anus”: Experience of Cancer Patients Living with Colostomy in South West Nigeria

“Une vie sans Anus”: Expérience des Patients atteints de Cancer Vivant avec une Colostomie dans le Sud-ouest du Nigéria

^{1,2,3,*}F. O. Wuraola, ^{2,3}A. A. Aderounmu, ^{3,4}J. Jackman, ^{3,5}B. Yibrehu, ^{1,2,3}O. Olasehinde, ³M. Ogunyemi, ^{1,2,3}A. O. Adisa, ^{3,6}T. P. Kingham, ^{1,2,3}I. O. Alatise

ABSTRACT

INTRODUCTION: As the incidence of colorectal cancer increases in Nigeria, more patients will get colostomies. Previous studies of patients with colostomies in other African countries have reported significant decreases in quality of life. Understanding the experiences of Nigerian patients is crucial for designing interventions that ensure patients can maintain a high quality of life after colostomy. This study aims to explore the impact of colostomy on the quality of life of Nigerian patients.

METHODS: Between August and December 2022, 16 in-depth interviews were conducted with patients who had undergone a colostomy for at least six months. Patients were identified through an institutional database of colorectal cancer patients at Obafemi Awolowo University Teaching Hospital in Southwest Nigeria.

RESULTS: Patients overwhelmingly reported life-altering challenges related to their colostomy. Some of the most commonly reported challenges included social isolation, financial constraints, sexual dissatisfaction, and altered self-image. Patients also reported that they did not understand until after surgery what it would be like to live with a colostomy.

CONCLUSION: As the number of cancer patients with colostomies increases in Nigeria, it is important to address the social and financial barriers that patients face after having a colostomy.

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KEYWORDS: Colostomy, Nigeria, Quality of life, Colorectal cancer, Survivors

RÉSUMÉ

INTRODUCTION: Avec l'augmentation de l'incidence du cancer colorectal au Nigéria, de plus en plus de patients subiront une colostomie. Des études antérieures menées dans d'autres pays africains ont révélé une diminution significative de la qualité de vie chez ces patients. Comprendre les expériences des patients nigériens est essentiel pour concevoir des interventions permettant de maintenir une qualité de vie élevée après une colostomie. Cette étude vise à explorer l'impact de la colostomie sur la qualité de vie des patients nigériens.

MÉTHODES: Entre août et décembre 2022, 16 entretiens approfondis ont été réalisés avec des patients ayant subi une colostomie depuis au moins six mois. Les patients ont été identifiés à partir d'une base de données institutionnelle de patients atteints de cancer colorectal à l'Hôpital Universitaire Obafemi Awolowo, dans le sud-ouest du Nigéria.

RÉSULTATS: Les patients ont largement rapporté des défis bouleversants liés à leur colostomie. Parmi les difficultés les plus fréquemment évoquées figuraient l'isolement social, les contraintes financières, l'insatisfaction sexuelle et une image de soi altérée. Les patients ont également indiqué qu'ils ne comprenaient pas, avant l'intervention chirurgicale, ce que signifiait réellement vivre avec une colostomie.

CONCLUSION: Avec l'augmentation du nombre de patients atteints de cancer vivant avec une colostomie au Nigéria, il est crucial de s'attaquer aux barrières sociales et financières auxquelles ces patients sont confrontés après l'intervention.

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MOTS-CLÉS: Colostomie, Nigéria, Qualité de vie, Cancer colorectal, Survivants

¹Department of Surgery, Faculty of Clinical Sciences, Obafemi Awolowo University, Ile-Ife, Nigeria

²Department of Surgery, Obafemi Awolowo University Teaching Hospitals Complex, Ile-Ife, Nigeria.

³African Research Group for Oncology, Ile-Ife, Nigeria

⁴Kaiser Permanente Bernard J Tyson School of Medicine, Pasadena, California, USA

⁵Department of Surgery, University of Toronto, Toronto, Canada

⁶Department of Surgery, Memorial Sloan Kettering Cancer Center, New York, USA

Corresponding Author: Dr. F. O. Wuraola, Department of Surgery, Faculty of Clinical Sciences, Obafemi Awolowo University, Ile-Ife, Nigeria. Email: fwuraola@oauife.edu.ng; +2348032287556