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Attachment styles as predictors of postsurgical psychological adaptation of lung cancer patients

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The purpose of the study was to define whether attachment styles allow for predicting posttreatment distress, state-anxiety, depression, negative or positive emotionality, while the same adaptation indicators from pretreatment measurement were strong predictors. Distress and its five components were measured by Symptom Checklist (SCL-90). State anxiety was assessed with The State-Trait Inventory, depression was evaluated with The Beck Depression Inventory, emotions were measured by The Emotions Scale. The three attachment styles were assessed using Hazan and Shaver's descriptions of how people typically feel in close relationships. The two-step hierarchic regression analysis has been conveyed with posttreatment psychological adaptation indexes as dependent variables, but with pretreatment adaptation indexes and posttreatment attachment styles as independent variables. Results in attachment styles scale predict posttreatment depression, negative and positive emotionality significantly, and state-anxiety and total distress marginally significantly. Individual contribution of attachment style to regulating levels of psychological adaptation indicators was also meaningful. Correlations analysis revealed significant relationships between patient preoperative style and his postoperative adaptation indexes, as well as between patient postoperative style and his preoperative adaptation indexes. To compare the strength of the two groups of correlation coefficients, the values of statistic "z" have been calculated. Subjects rating themselves higher in anxious-ambivalent style before operation, revealed significantly stronger distress and its components after hospitalization. In addition, insecure partner attachment styles were associated positively with patient adaptation variables after operation. The comparison in strength of correlation coefficients created by partner style with patient adaptation indexes after treatment demonstrates that insecure styles of partner make patient adaptation more difficult than secure style makes it easier. The results will be discussed in terms of clinical implications, psychotherapeutic interventions and future research.

Biography

Joanna Szymczak had been working as a lecturer at Medical University in Gdansk (GuMed) in Poland for over 20 years till February 2018. Since then she has been continuing cooperation with the University. She has been also cooperating for over 10 years with SWPS University of Social Sciences and Humanities in Sopot, Poland. Her research refers to psychosomatics, an adaptation process to disease and its treatment in the attachment paradigm, which was reflected in her reports. Her specialty is clinical psychology. Dr Szymczak has been counseling polish and international students of GuMed for 15 years. She is a certified psychoanalytic psychotherapist working at private practice in Gdansk. She is a member of Polish Society of Psychoanalytic Psychotherapy, and also a candidate of Polish Psychoanalytical Society with membership in the International Psychoanalytical Association (IPA).

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