

Sexuality in kidney transplant recipients: A qualitative study

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Abstract

End-stage kidney disease has a negative impact on patients' quality of life. People who receive a kidney transplant experience an improvement in many areas of their daily life. Sexuality is a general component of health, which can be affected by end-stage kidney disease and kidney transplant. The aim of this study was to explore and understand the experiences and perspectives of kidney transplant recipients regarding their sexuality. A qualitative study based on Gadamer's hermeneutic philosophy was carried out. Two focus groups and nine interviews were conducted with 18 kidney transplant recipients. Data were audio-recorded, transcribed, and analyzed with the help of qualitative analysis software. Two main themes emerged from the data: (1) "The impact of a kidney transplant on sexuality", with the subthemes "sexuality is relegated to the background", "physical decline acts as a sexual inhibitor", and "changes in sexual activity following a kidney transplant"; (2) "Sexual education in kidney transplant recipients" with the subthemes "sexuality: a hidden concern amongst kidney transplant recipients" and "talking about sexuality with healthcare professionals". Sexuality is a frequent concern among kidney transplant recipients. The physiological and emotional changes experienced after kidney transplant exert a great influence on their sexuality. Healthcare professionals rarely discuss sexuality concerns with kidney transplant recipients. Professional sexual education and assistance are necessary to improve sexual health satisfaction of kidney transplant recipients. © 2021 by the authors. Licensee MDPI, Basel, Switzerland.

Author keywords

Kidney transplant; Qualitative study; Sexual functioning; Sexuality; Transplant recipients