The Relationship Between Body Mass Index and Sexual Function in Endometrial Cancer

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OBJECTIVES: To explore the association between pretreatment body mass index (BMI) and post-treatment sexual function in women treated for endometrial cancer.

SAMPLE & SETTING: 28 postmenopausal women treated with vaginal brachytherapy (VBT) took part in this multisite exploratory secondary analysis at the University of Pennsylvania and Northwestern University.

METHODS & VARIABLES: Secondary data analysis was used to determine if pretreatment BMI is associated with post-VBT sexual function in postmenopausal women treated for endometrial cancer at baseline and at six months post-treatment. Because of small sample size, participants were dichotomized according to enrollment BMI: 30 or greater (obese) and less than 30 (non-obese). The Female Sexual Function Index was used to assess sexual function, with total scores of 26.55 or less indicating sexual dysfunction.

RESULTS: Both groups had poor sexual function at baseline. Although improved function was observed with time, neither group reached a score indicating healthy sexual function.

IMPLICATIONS FOR NURSING: Understanding factors that influence sexual health in patients with gynecologic cancer can improve post-treatment quality of life.

KEYWORDS: endometrial cancer; body mass index; Female Sexual Function Index; sexual dysfunction

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