

Sexual Concerns of Cardiac Patients: Psychometric Analysis

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BACKGROUND

- ♥ Cardiac patients often report:
 - Fear, anxiety, sexual concerns
 - Symptoms interfering with sexual activity
 - Changes in sexual interest and function
- ♥ Validated instruments for use in cardiac populations are needed to better understand sexual concerns

PURPOSE

To analyze the psychometric properties of the Steinke Sexual Concerns Inventory – General Cardiac Version (SSCI-GCV) in those with diverse cardiac diagnoses

METHODS

- ♥ Descriptive, cross-sectional, survey, using Dillman's survey methods
- ♥ Prospective participants identified using ICD-9 DX codes, and admitted with cardiac diagnosis over a 1-year period; ages ≥ 25 ; able to read and write English
 - CAD, ACS, angina, AMI, HF diagnoses
- ♥ 14 items – change in sexual relationship (1), sexual fears (5), change in interest (1), symptoms w/ sexual activity (3), sexual dysfunction (3), other sexual concerns (1, open-ended)
 - Likert scale '0' never to '3' frequently
 - Higher score = greater concerns (R=0-33)
- ♥ Instrument revised from similar instrument for sexual concerns in HF
 - Added 1 item for sexual fear
 - Questions on ED revised for clarity
- ♥ Analyses
 - Item analysis; Construct validity – Factor analysis; Construct validity – Known Groups for sexual activity using t-tests



SAMPLE

- ♥ Sample – n=205
 - Parent Study – n=336
- ♥ Gender: 74% male, 26% female
- ♥ Mean age: 63 yrs, SD=12.43, R=31-90
- ♥ Married: 69%; Ethnicity: White 90%

RESULTS

- ♥ After item analysis of Likert scaled items, 12 of 13 items retained
 - Amount of change in sexual relationship poorly correlated (<0.30)
- ♥ Two items on ED, either male patient or partner combined as one ED variable
- ♥ Analyses computed on 11 items*
- ♥ Score range 0-30, M=8.45, SD 7.02
- ♥ Sexual concerns, sexual interest, symptoms w/ sexual activity all >0.50 ; ED and partner overprotectiveness <0.50
 - Items retained – consistent w/ literature and patient/partner self-report

Variable Loadings on Each Factor (Final 11 items*)

Partner overprotective-ness	0.382	Shortness of breath w/ sex	0.724
Afraid to have sex	0.808	Chest pain w/ sex	0.715
Partner afraid to have sex	0.627	Excess fatigue w/ sex	0.790
Afraid of heart attack w/ sex	0.829	Difficulty having orgasm	0.656
Afraid of cardiac arrest w/ sex	0.831	Problems w/ erection, patient or partner (2 items combined)*	0.359
Lack of interest in sex	0.553		

Chronbach alpha for SSCI-GCV = 0.86

- ♥ Sexual concerns were not significantly different for those sexually active vs. those not sexually active ($t=0.03$, $p=0.976$)

CONCLUSIONS

- ♥ SSCI-GCV was reliable & valid for measuring sexual concerns of cardiac patients, and may be useful in both research and clinical settings
- ♥ Assessment of sexual concerns of those sexually active and not active – sexual concerns may present a barrier to sexual activity for some patients
- ♥ The instrument may be a useful tool to facilitate discussion of sexual concerns and sexual activity



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