

Disease Perception and Coping Style of Patients with Diastasis Recti Abdominis Using the Biopsychosocial Model: An Interview Study

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September 6, 2022

Abstract

Objective: Discussing the influence of Diastasis Recti Abdominis (DRA) on patients' social, psychological, and biological experiences, It tries to direct the patients' attention to DRA. Meanwhile, how patients deal with DRA is summarised to provide effective measures to help them, provide reference for medical staff in managing DRA. **Design:** An observational and descriptive study design **Setting:** Zhejiang Province, China **Sample:** Female diagnosed with DRA. **Methods:** A purposive sampling method was adopted when selecting female DRA participants for semi-structured interviews based on their disease perception with the Colaizzi seven-step analysis method being used for analysis. **Main outcome measure:** DRA people's perception and response to disease **Results:** In the interviews, three themes, and 10 sub-themes, were extracted 1) Inadequate disease perception (including a lack of aetiology cognition, incomplete prevention knowledge, and insufficient treatment knowledge), 2) The disease as a daily inconvenience (including body image disorder, abdominal muscle weakness, poor pelvic floor strength, backache, and a psychological burden), and 3) Varying attitudes and management responses to DRA (including positive and negative responses). **Conclusion:** Patients awareness of their DRA should be improved to consider whether any of their physical or mental discomfort experienced in daily life is related to this condition. DRA's management should be holistic and comprehensive— including a simple symptomatic treatment— along with emotional, psychological, and behavioural coping strategies. **Tweetable Abstract:** DRA is common among women and has adverse effects on patients. The exploration of DRA helps to promote disease perception of DRA and promote women's health.

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