

ASSESSMENT OF PSYCHOEMOTIONAL DISORDERS USING THE SELF-REPORTING QUESTIONNAIRE 20 (SRQ-20) IN MEN WITH INFERTILITY

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Abstract. *The article presents the results of assessing psychoemotional disorders using the Self-Reporting Questionnaire 20 (SRQ-20) in men with infertility. To fulfill the goals and objectives set for the dissertation research, 80 men from 18 to 33 years old were examined, from partner couples who had been in infertile marriage for more than 2 years, the control group consisted of 30 practically healthy men. Men with various fertility disorders, who were in an infertile marriage due to their fault, experienced more pronounced psycho-emotional disorders than men who were in an infertile marriage with a female factor of infertility, where adaptation disorders were also noted, but less pronounced.*

Keywords: *male infertility, fertility disorders, stress and psycho-emotional disorders.*

Relevance: Infertility can be the basis for the development of stress, both psychological and emotional, and can also cause financial difficulties for a married couple. Classic reactions to infertility include shock, sadness, depression, anger and disappointment, loss of self-esteem and confidence, and loss of a sense of control. It is worth noting that reproductive sterility is not life-threatening; it is still one of the stressful life experiences of couples. The high stress associated with infertility can be explained by the fact that childbirth is considered important in society at large(1,2,3).

Additionally, infertile couples often hide their emotions, ideas, and beliefs because infertility is still considered a private topic. Therefore, infertile couples may be subject to social pressure. In addition, individual relationships with your partner, as well as friends and family members, may be affected. These family members or friends may make meaningful views and suggestions that may cause further concern(1,2,3).

Purpose of the study: studying the presence of probable psycho-emotional disorder using the Self-Reporting Questionnaire 20 (SRQ-20) in men with infertility.

Materials and research methods: To fulfill the goals and objectives set for the dissertation research, 80 men from 18 to 33 years old were examined, from partner couples who had been in infertile marriage for more than 2 years, the control group consisted of 30 practically healthy men.

We divided these men, according to the nature of their infertile marriage, into 2 groups: the 1st, main group, consisted of 50 men with various fertility disorders, and the 2nd comparison group, made up of 30 men with normal reproductive function in whom the cause of their infertile marriage was female factor. In addition, a control group was examined, which consisted of 30 practically healthy men, married and with children.

To objectify our research, we used a questionnaire adapted by WHO and called Self-Reporting Questionnaire 20 (SRQ-20) translated into Russian. Items on the SRQ-20 are scored 0 (“no,” symptom absent) or 1 (“yes,” symptom present). Item scores are summed to obtain a total

score. A score above the cut-off point (usually considered 8) indicates the presence of probable stress disorders.

Research results: The first question concerns feelings of nervousness or tension. In the main group, 90% of respondents answered affirmatively to this question, in the comparative group - 50%, and in the control group - 13.3%. Thus, we can conclude that half of the men in the comparison group also had feelings of anxiety, and 13.3% of healthy men also showed such symptoms. The next question concerns feelings of unhappiness. To the question do you feel happy, 20% of respondents in the main group, 10% in the comparison group (the difference is not statistically significant), and no one answered affirmatively in the control group. This may indicate that men in infertile marriages, regardless of the reason, feel unhappy.

Table 1

Detailed analysis of stress disorders on the SRQ-20 scale (%).

Question	Main	Comparisons	Control	R
Do you feel nervous or tense?	90	50	13.3	<0.001*12 0.0023
Do you feel unhappy?	20	10	0	0.026*2
Do you get scared easily?	thirty	13.3	3.3	0.008*20.0 122
Do you usually cry more often?	26	10	0	0.004*0.00 72
Do you sleep well?	62	33.3	6.7	<0.001*20. 020*13
Do you get frequent headaches?	38	26.7	6.7	0.009*0.00 62
Do you have a feeling of discomfort in your stomach?	48	20	6.7	<0.001*20. 0251
Do you have poor digestion?	thirty	20	3.3	0.016*0.01 22
Do you have a bad appetite?	14	10	3.3	0.306
Are your hands shaking?	16	6.7	3.3	0.146
Does your daily work tire you out?	58	36.7	10	<0.001*20. 0293
Do you feel tired all the time?	82	36.7	10	<0.001*12 0.015*3
Do you get tired easily?	60	26.7	6.7	<0.001*20. 00810.038 3
Do you find it difficult to make decisions?	40	16.7	3.3	<0.001*2
Do you find it difficult to enjoy everyday activities?	22	10	0	0.015*0.01 72
Do you have problems with mental functioning?	22	10	6.7	0.120
Have you lost interest in active life (surroundings)?	14	6.7	0	0.081
Do you feel like a worthless person?	12	0	0	0.022*

Do you feel like you are not playing a useful role in your life?	10	0	0	0.043*
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* - Differences between groups; 1 - Differences between the main and comparative groups; 2 - Differences between the main and control groups; 3 - Differences between comparison and control groups

As for fearfulness, in the comparative group and control group the proportion of people prone to mild fright is lower than in the main group, as well as tearfulness more often than usual; 26% in the main group and 10% in the comparative group answered this question in the affirmative. This may indicate that a certain percentage of respondents (especially men with infertility) often experience emotional stress and are prone to displaying emotions.

The next question is: "Are you sleeping well?" According to the table, 62% of the main group have problems sleeping, while in the comparison group this percentage was 33.3%, and in the control group - only 6.7%. This suggests that infertile men are more prone to sleep disturbances, which can in turn affect performance and overall health, so it is important to pay attention to this and take steps to improve sleep quality. 38% of men from the main group have problems with headaches, while in the comparison group this percentage is 26.7%. As we can see, the difference between the groups is insignificant. Headaches can be associated with stress, tension, fatigue and other factors that affect mental and physical health. This indicator may also indicate that people from the main group are more prone to stress and overexertion, which in turn can lead to headaches. Also, those examined had various complaints about gastrointestinal dysfunction; 48% of people from the main group experienced abdominal discomfort, while in the comparison group this percentage was 20%. In addition, 16.7% of men in the main group noted periodic tremors in their hands, while in the comparison group this figure was 6.7%.

Issues related to fatigue and lack of energy are most common among the core group. The percentage of men who feel tired all the time is 82%, fatigue is 60%, issues related to problems in mental functioning (22%) and decision making (40%) also have a high prevalence among infertile men in infertile marriages. Men in infertile marriages with a female factor of infertility also have various kinds of adaptation disorders, general weakness and fatigue were noted by 36.7% of men, which was statistically significantly higher than in the control group, and as for mental activity, in this case it was positive. Approximately 16% of men answered the above questions, which is more than among healthy men, but the difference with the control group was not significant.

The main group showed a higher level of loss of interest (14%) than the comparison groups (6.7%), in the remaining questions, except for suicidal thoughts, which none of the surveyed had, the men of the main group answered positively, namely 12% answered that they feel worthless, and 10% noted that they cannot be useful.

Conclusions: Thus, men with various fertility disorders, who were in an infertile marriage due to their fault, experienced more pronounced psycho-emotional disorders than men who were in an infertile marriage with a female factor of infertility, where adaptation disorders were also noted, but less pronounced.

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