University of Huddersfield Repository

Kola, Susanna

Anxiety and the Colposcopy Experience

Original Citation


This version is available at http://eprints.hud.ac.uk/9782/

The University Repository is a digital collection of the research output of the University, available on Open Access. Copyright and Moral Rights for the items on this site are retained by the individual author and/or other copyright owners. Users may access full items free of charge; copies of full text items generally can be reproduced, displayed or performed and given to third parties in any format or medium for personal research or study, educational or not-for-profit purposes without prior permission or charge, provided:

- The authors, title and full bibliographic details is credited in any copy;
- A hyperlink and/or URL is included for the original metadata page; and
- The content is not changed in any way.

For more information, including our policy and submission procedure, please contact the Repository Team at: E.mailbox@hud.ac.uk.

http://eprints.hud.ac.uk/
Anxiety and the Colposcopy Experience

Susie Kola
School of Psychology
NUI Galway
Anxiety

- Can be described as a vague, unpleasant emotional state
  - Incl. Feelings of dread, distress, apprehension, uneasiness

- Is accompanied by racing heart, trembling, light-headedness, sweating, rapid breathing
Anxiety in Cervical Screening and Colposcopy

- Anxiety is a commonly experienced reaction
  - Large percentage of women report fear and anxiety following abnormal smear results
  - Many women also report anticipatory anxiety prior to colposcopy

- A moderate amount of anxiety may be beneficial

- Anxiety decreases following colposcopy
Monitoring-blunting

- People differ in their ways of dealing with medical situations
  - Monitors – prefer lots of information, and scan the environment for cues
  - Blunters - try to ignore threat-relevant information
Study to Reduce Anxiety During Colposcopy

Interested in reducing the impact of the colposcopy procedure itself

Patients assigned to one of four conditions
- Relaxation
- Distraction
- Focus
- Control
Results

- Blood pressure was recorded during the colposcopy.
- For systolic BP and diastolic BP monitoring style and study condition interacted.
Implications

- Patients that normally choose to distract from stressful situations benefit from relaxation or distraction, and should not watch their colposcopies.

- Patients that normally choose to pay close attention to what’s going on still benefit more from relaxation than being left to cope on their own.
Anxiety is a commonly experienced reaction to cervical screening and colposcopy

A moderate amount of anticipatory anxiety may be a good thing

Relaxation during colposcopy reduces anxiety and stress both for those that normally want little information and for those that normally want lots of information