

## Psychological characteristics and rehabilitation of enterostomized patients

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### Abstract

**AIM:** To analyze the psychological characteristics of enterostomized patients, identify the effective methods in order to improve the psychological rehabilitation of these patients and promote their quality of life.

**METHODS:** Questionnaires were filled up by 293 enterostomized patients pre and post-operatively to identify their psychological characteristics. One group ( $n = 45$ ) of post-enterostomized patients were taught to take care of stoma by irrigation, the others ( $n = 248$ ) to merely look after the colostomy bag.

**RESULTS:** The psychological characteristics were identified as disbelief, fear, desperation or anxiety pre-operatively; as unstable mood, irritable, afraid, sense of lost body image or depression post-operatively; as low self-esteem, self isolation, or despondent in rehabilitative period respectively. Results revealed that the patients need psychological support both pre-operatively and post-operatively. Meanwhile, proper stoma care is of the same importance. After irrigation 1-3 mo regularly, most of the 45 regular irrigating patients were free from skin irritation problems; 40 (89%) patients had daily or bidaily motions; and most of them showed an absence of fecal leakage or gases, and they hardly suffer from bad odors. Some of them even only partially use the colostomy bag. These patients were more confident to reinstate to their previous daily life. Only 5 (11%) patients had irregular bowel movements. Enterostomized patient club and out patient consultation clinic are beneficial to improve their psychological rehabilitation.

**CONCLUSION:** Careful pre-operative psychological support can help patients' postoperative adoption. The psychological rehabilitation of the patients can speed their physical recovery. Proper stoma care and early reinstatement into previous social life are also important to improve the patients' rehabilitation.

**Key words:** Enterostomy/rehabilitation; Enterostomy/psychology; postoperative care; Life quality; Preoperative care

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