

**Abstract**

**Original Article**

**Sense of Coherence, Sleep Disorders and Health Related Quality of Life in Women with Breast Cancer in Greece**

**Anastasia Barbouni, MD, PhD**

Pediatrician, elected professor of Public Health, Dept. of Public & Administrative Health, National School of Public Health, Athens, Greece

**Alexandra Papakosta, MSc**

Medical laboratory technologist, Oncological Hospital of Athens "Agios Savvas", Athens, Greece

**Eirini Amanaki, PhD**

Researcher, Dept. of Public & Administrative Health, National School of Public Health, Athens, Greece

**Kyriakoula Merakou, PhD**

Teaching and Research Associate, Dept of Public & Administrative Health, National School of Public Health, Athens, Greece

**Correspondence:** Kyriakoula Merakou, Dept of Public & Administrative Health, National School of Public Health. 196, Alexandras Ave., Athens, 11521, Greece. E-mail: kmerakou@esdy.edu.gr

**Abstract**

**Background:** Breast cancer and its therapy methods has effects on women' quality of life, sleep and working and social life. High sense of coherence may help women to cope more effectively with disease stress in everyday life.

**Objective:** This study aims to determine the factors that contribute to the quality of life, sleep disorders of breast cancer patients and the sense of coherence needed to cope with the illness induced stress.

**Methodology:** The study population was female outpatients with breast cancer who visited an Anticancer - Oncology Hospital of Athens. One hundred and nine women met the eligibility criteria. Patients reported demographic, socioeconomic, and clinical data, and completed the Greek version of the following questionnaires: a) Sense of Coherence scale (SOC-13), b) Athens Insomnia Scale (AIS), and c) SF-12 Health Related Quality of Life (HRQoL).

**Results:** The total SOC score was 60.0 and correlated with status of the disease, sleep disorder and Mental Health Summary (MHS). 67.9% of the participants suffered from sleep disorders, significantly affected by co morbidity and total SOC score as well as its three subscales. Regarding HRQoL, the mean of Physical Health Summary (PHS) and Mental Health Summary (MHS) was 39.9 and 46.9 respectively. PHS correlated only with duration of the disease ( $p=0.032$ ) while MHS correlated with status of the disease ( $p=0.015$ ), sleep disorder ( $p<0.001$ ) and total SOC score ( $p<0.001$ ) as well as its three subscales.

**Conclusions:** Sleep and both components of HRQoL (physical and mental health) are negatively influenced in women with breast cancer. Women with breast cancer, their families need special training to deal with the daily difficulties from the disease.

**Keywords:** breast cancer; sleep disorder; health-related quality of life; sense of coherence.