

## Sigma's 29th International Nursing Research Congress

### Factors Influencing Psychosocial Adjustment in Patients After Reconstructive Surgeries for Oral Cancer

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**Purpose:** Appropriate psychosocial adjustment is crucial for patients with oral cancer to cope with multiple stressors of their disease and to balance their lives within the restrictions imposed by the consequences of cancer and its treatments. Knowledge on predictive factors of psychosocial adjustment in oral patients after reconstructive surgeries has been limited. The study aim was to explore the relationships among, facial disfigurement, depression, social support, and psychosocial adjustment in patients after reconstructive surgeries for oral cancer

**Methods:** A cross-sectional study with a predictive correlational design was conducted. A convenient sample of 77 oral cancer patients post reconstruction surgeries was recruited from otolaryngology, and oral and maxillofacial surgery outpatient clinics of three general hospitals in Taiwan. Data were collected with the study questionnaires, including the Facial *Disfigurement* Scale, the Social Support Scale, the Center for Epidemiologic Studies Depression Scale, and the Psychosocial Adjustment to Illness Scale. Statistical analysis included descriptive statistics, t-test, One-way ANOVA, Pearson correlation, and hierarchical regression analysis.

**Results:** The mean score on the Psychosocial Adjustment to illness Scale was 413.01 (SD = 32.32), indicating that these participants were struggling in adjusting to their illness. 71.4 % of the participants were maladjusted. Employment status, financial status, location of tumor, perceived facial disfigurement, depression, family social support, and provider social support explained 68% of the variance in psychosocial adjustment ( $F(4,95)=16.4, p < 0.001$ ). 32.5 % of the participants were clinically depressed.

**Conclusions:** The level of psychosocial adjustment in oral cancer patients is suboptimal. Overall, the patients who had no job, with a lower income, perceived severer facial disfigurement, severely depressed, and with weak family social support reported poorer psychosocial adjustment to their illness.

**Implications for Practice:** The findings of this study are relevant to the understanding of preconditions that enable oral cancer patients to successfully adjust to the disease and its diverse consequences. Patients who have no job, lower income, perceived severer facial disfigurement, and with less family social support have a greater risk for psychosocial maladjustment. Medical professionals may use these variables to identify higher risk groups for early intensive intervention.

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**Title:**

Factors Influencing Psychosocial Adjustment in Patients After Reconstructive Surgeries for Oral Cancer

**Keywords:**

Disfigurement, oral cancer and psychosocial adjustment

**References:**

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**Abstract Summary:**

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**Content Outline:**

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depression, family social support, and provider social support explained 68% of the variance in psychosocial adjustment ( $F(4,95)=16.4, p < 0.001$ ). 32.5 % of the participants were clinically depressed.

**Conclusions:** The level of psychosocial adjustment in oral cancer patients is suboptimal. Overall, the patients who had no job, with a lower income, perceived severer facial disfigurement, severely depressed, and with weak family social support reported poorer psychosocial adjustment to their illness.

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