

## **The psychological impact of infertility: comparison with patients with other medical conditions.**

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To compare the psychological symptoms of infertile women with patients with other chronic medical conditions, subjects completed the Symptom Checklist-90 (Revised) (SCL-90R), a standardized, validated and widely used psychological questionnaire, prior to enrolling in a group behavioral treatment program. All subjects were female and the totals in each program were as follows: 149 with infertility, 136 with chronic pain, 22 undergoing cardiac rehabilitation, 93 with cancer, 77 with hypertension, and 11 with human immunodeficiency virus (HIV)-positive status. The infertile women had global symptom scores equivalent to the cancer, cardiac rehabilitation and hypertension patients, but lower scores than the chronic pain and HIV-positive patients ( $p < 0.0001$  and  $p < 0.02$  respectively). The anxiety and depression scores of the infertile women were significantly lower than chronic pain patients but not statistically different from the other groups. The results suggest that the psychological symptoms associated with infertility are similar to those associated with other serious medical conditions. Therefore, standard psychosocial interventions for serious medical illness should also be applied in infertility treatment.