

Divorce and Cancer

Bassam Abdul Rasool Hassan¹ & Ali Haider Mohammed²

¹ Department of Pharmacy, Al Rafidain University College, Baghdad, Iraq

² School of Pharmacy, Monash University Malaysia, Selangor, Malaysia

Correspondence: Bassam Abdul Rasool Hassan, Department of Pharmacy, Al Rafidain University College, Baghdad, Iraq.

doi:10.56397/SSSH.2023.07.02

Abstract

The potential influence of cancer on marital status may be distinctive owing to the intricate lifestyle and social modifications that arise throughout the course of life. Marriage can offer substantial social and emotional backing to individuals with cancer, in addition to furnishing crucial resources during therapy and convalescence via a partner's earnings and medical insurance benefits. However, the institution of marriage may exhibit reduced resilience towards the various stressors associated with cancer treatment and recovery, while simultaneously encountering additional challenges such as the presence of young children or decreased job stability. The emotional and financial burdens associated with cancer may have a significant impact on the marital relationships of cancer survivors, potentially resulting in divorce.

Keywords: divorce, cancer, negative impact, relationship

1. Introduction

The legal separation of spouses is known as a divorce. Most jurisdictions recognise divorce as the legal process by which a married couple is released from their legal obligations to one another and the dissolution of their marriage. A divorce is the formal termination of a marriage by a court or other authoritative entity. Divorce refers to the formal procedure by which a marriage can be legally dissolved (Wikipedia, 2023).

Divorce has consequences for the entire country, not just the individuals involved. If a country relies on its families to raise its children and build its economy, then a divorce can have a devastating effect on the country as a whole (David A. Sbarra, Karen Hasselmo, & Kyle J. Bourassa, 2015; Shah Fahad & Naushad Khan, 2020).

Even for those who only experience short-term disruptions in their mental health, divorce is a major life change that can bring about many difficulties, including but not limited to significant financial shifts and legal involvement; renegotiating parenting relationships and the management of co-parenting conflicts; shifting social and support networks; and relocation (David A. Sbarra, Karen Hasselmo, & Kyle J. Bourassa, 2015; Shah Fahad & Naushad Khan, 2020; R. Kelly Raley & Megan M. Sweeney, 2020; Alexandra Killewald, 2016).

Many people's sense of self is shaken to its core when their marriage fails, prompting them to ask, "Who am I without my partner?" Understanding who does well and who does not after a divorce is of great public health importance, as 40-45% of first marriages end in divorce and approximately 2.5 million adults are newly affected by the end of a marriage each year (Hari Setia Putra, Ali Anis, Zul Azhar, & Jemi Juneldi, 2021; Ubong E. Eyo., 2018; Ilene Wolcott & Jody Hughes, 1999).

2. Causes of Divorce

Various factors play a significant role in causing divorce, including:

- 1) Education level: Low-educated working spouses are more likely to divorce than their more educated

- counterparts, according to the study's authors (causes 1).
- 2) Domestic violence, which presents itself in various forms, can play a significant role in causing divorce (Ubong E. Eyo., 2018; Ilene Wolcott & Jody Hughes, 1999).
 - 3) Infidelity: Twenty percent of husbands and wives say infidelity was the primary reason they got a divorce (Hari Setia Putra, Ali Anis, Zul Azhar, & Jemi Juneldi, 2021; Ubong E. Eyo., 2018; Ilene Wolcott & Jody Hughes, 1999; Fakir M. Al Gharaibeh, 2018).
 - 4) Obedience in religion: The stability of society is often attributed to religion, yet this is not always the case (i.e., it may be the cause of divorce) (Hari Setia Putra, Ali Anis, Zul Azhar, & Jemi Juneldi, 2021; Ubong E. Eyo., 2018; Ilene Wolcott & Jody Hughes, 1999).
 - 5) Financial factor: This factor can play role in incidence of divorce in various ways:
 - a) When a married couple is having money problems, the stress can cause continual bickering and a breakdown in communication.
 - b) Whether a working wife's income makes the marriage more stable or whether it frees her to consider divorce because she is less financially reliant on her husband (Hari Setia Putra, Ali Anis, Zul Azhar, & Jemi Juneldi, 2021; Ubong E. Eyo., 2018; Ilene Wolcott & Jody Hughes, 1999; Fakir M. Al Gharaibeh, 2018).
 - 6) Age at first marriage: The spouses are less likely to make wise marriage choices while they are teenagers because they lack the intellectual, emotional, and experiential maturity to do so. This increases the likelihood of divorce among those who married for the first time at this young age (David A. Sbarra, Karen Hasselmo, & Kyle J. Bourassa, 2015; Ubong E. Eyo., 2018).
 - 7) Working hours: There is a favourable association between working more than 40 hours per week and the high divorce rate (Ubong E. Eyo., 2018).
 - 8) Medical status: Infertility, whether on the part of the wife or the husband, long-term disease, insanity, cancer, HIV/AIDS, etc. can all be grounds for a divorce. Particularly when combined with societal pressure, infertility might result in a marriage's dissolution (Ubong E. Eyo., 2018; Ilene Wolcott & Jody Hughes, 1999; Fakir M. Al Gharaibeh, 2018).
 - 9) Drug abuse and addiction: An addiction, particularly one that results from drug or alcohol abuse, can have a negative impact on a marriage. Resentment, tension, emotional distance, and even physical assault can emerge when substance dependence intensifies. All of this can significantly cause the termination of the marriage, i.e., divorce (Hari Setia Putra, Ali Anis, Zul Azhar, & Jemi Juneldi, 2021; Ubong E. Eyo., 2018; Alexis C. Edwards et al., 2018).
 - 10) Disappointment: Marital conflicts resulting from disappointment can potentially culminate in divorce, thereby exacerbating the level of disappointment experienced (Ubong E. Eyo., 2018; Ilene Wolcott & Jody Hughes, 1999; Fakir M. Al Gharaibeh, 2018; Alexis C. Edwards et al., 2018).

3. Divorce and Cancer

The chronic and devastating nature of cancer often leads to psychological trauma among patients. The illness has the potential to induce substantial modifications to the patient's way of life, consequently exerting a noteworthy impact on the lifestyle of their significant other (Dominik Fugmann et al., 2022; Saeed M. Alzahrani et al., 2018).

Divorce has negative effects on everyone involved, including socially, financially, and physically. There is a statistically significant increase in mortality among those who have been divorced (Dominik Fugmann et al., 2022; Saeed M. Alzahrani et al., 2018). Social and emotional support from loved ones is one of the greatest protective elements for people with cancer. With an annual incidence of 18.1 million cases worldwide, any correlation between cancer and the breakdown of marriage would be of great importance (Dominik Fugmann et al., 2022; Saeed M. Alzahrani et al., 2018).

According to a research study that examined young adult individuals who have survived cancer, it was determined that these individuals are more susceptible to experiencing divorce or separation as a result of the financial and emotional challenges associated with their medical condition (Saeed M. Alzahrani et al., 2018).

4. Rate of Divorce and Cancer Type

Divorce rates appear to be different for male and female cancer sufferers, according to research. Researchers found that divorce and separation rates were eight times higher for women with brain tumours than for men. However, a different French study came to the opposite conclusion, finding no link between cancer survival and divorce. Collectively, these studies suggest that the relationship between a cancer diagnosis and marital status is

nuanced and possibly multifaceted (Saeed M. Alzahrani et al., 2018).

Some forms of cancer, such as cervical cancer and brain tumours, have been linked to a rising divorce rate, according to other research. There may be a correlation between a person's marital status and how they fare with cancer, since one study found unmarried individuals had a higher risk of death. They also discovered that men who had been divorced had a higher risk of dying from cancer (Saeed M. Alzahrani et al., 2018).

5. Conclusion

Even though there is a direct relationship between cancer and the rate of divorce, but this relationship varies depending on the type of cancer and gender.

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