

# Testing of individual differences in treatment outcome of patients with cancer metastatic disease in patients treated at the University Clinical Hospital Mostar

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**AIM:** The aim of this study was to determine differences in the level of cortisol in a group of patients with cancer present with malignant disease, with increased and decreased level of optimism/pessimism in relation to spirituality.

**SUBJECTS AND METHOD:** The study included 60 subjects between 49 years to 88 years. Data were collected at the Department of Pulmonary Diseases and TB and Oncology Clinic, and Department of Laboratory Diagnostics, University Clinical Hospital Mostar.

**RESULTS:** The study included 90 patients presenting with metastatic disease. In the sample were slightly more men represented 48 (53.33%), the highest number of pensioners was 50 (55.55%), and most common they had a secondary education 40 (44.44%). Demographic data as a predictor variable can not predict the status of optimism / pessimism ( $\chi^2 = 4.80$ ,  $df = 8$ ;  $p > 0.05$ ).

Optimists scored higher on coping strategies focused on tasks and avoidance, while pessimists scored higher on a scale of coping focused on emotions and level of cortisol. The level of morning cortisol, in most of the researched sample was below (Reference values: Men and women: 7-10 hours: 171-536 nmol / L; 16-18 hours: 64-340 nmol / L) and does not significantly affect the assessment of optimism or pessimism in patients with metastatic disease who are permanently exposed to chronic stress.

**CONCLUSION:** Subjects with higher levels of optimism often resort to coping strategies focused on tasks, and avoiding, pessimistic resort to a strategy aimed at the emotions.

**Keywords:** cancer, cortisol, optimism, pessimism, metastatic disease

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