

Abstract

RESEARCH PAPER: Experiences of Women Living with Heart Failure
STUDENT: Nancy J. Pitcock, RN, BSW
DEGREE: Master of Science in Nursing
COLLEGE: College of Applied Sciences & Technology
DATE: May, 2012

The majority of studies related to heart failure (HF) focus on men, or include only a limited number of women. There are differences in symptom manifestation and management between men and women related to incidence, age of diagnosis, risk factors, survival rate, and response to treatment of HF (Rhodes & Bowles, 2002). More information is needed about how women with HF perceive life experiences. The purpose of this qualitative study is to describe perceptions of women living with HF from a personal perspective. A phenomenological approach using Colaizzi's methodology will be used. This is a replication of Rhodes and Bowles' (2002) study. The anticipated purposeful sample will include 10 women ranging in age from 60-70. Women will have been diagnosed with Stage II HF by a cardiologist per New York Heart Association (NYHA) classification, living at home, and able to accomplish activities of daily living (ADL) independently. Open-ended interviews will be conducted with each woman by the researcher lasting about 2 hours. The question is: How do women with HF perceive life experiences? Understanding the daily lived experiences of women with heart failure will provide clinicians useful information in the development of plans of care that are specific to this population.