

Assessing Quality of Life for New Diabetes Treatments and Technologies: A Simple Patient-Centered Score

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Abstract

Background:

A simple quality of life measure is needed for use in diabetes, particularly for the assessment of new treatments and technologies. We devised and validated a patient-centered quality of life (PCQoL) measure that should be applicable to routine clinical practice or trial of therapies.

Methods:

People with diabetes completed a two-part, PCQoL questionnaire where they nominated five aspects of general- and diabetes-related life judged most important for their overall quality of life and rated each for current level of satisfaction. Scores derived from the questionnaire were compared with a reference measure—the Diabetes Control and Complications Trial diabetes quality of life (DQoL) score. Both were repeated after 1 month. The participants were 72 diabetic patients (60% with type 1 diabetes); 29 people with type 1 diabetes were treated by continuous subcutaneous insulin infusion (CSII) and 14 were treated by multiple daily insulin injections (MDI).

Results:

Patients most often cited family and relationships or fear of complications and hypoglycemia as important facets of quality of life for them. The PCQoL measure was highly correlated with the reference DQoL measure ($r = 0.73$, $p < 0.0001$), had high repeatability ($r = 0.91$, $p < 0.0001$), and could be completed in less than 5 minutes. The test was sensitive enough to detect a better quality of life in CSII-treated patients vs MDI-treated patients.

Conclusion:

The PCQoL measure is simple, quick, valid, and suitable for routine use in diabetes or trials of new treatments.

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Abbreviations: (CSII) continuous subcutaneous insulin infusion, (DQoL) diabetes quality of life score, (HbA1c) glycated hemoglobin, (MDI) multiple daily insulin injections, (PCQoL) patient-centered quality of life score

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