

IS THERE A RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN URINARY SYMPTOMS AND SYMPTOMS OF UROGENITAL PROLAPSE WHEN ASSESSING QUALITY OF LIFE?

Aims of Study

The use of Quality of Life questionnaires is becoming increasingly important when assessing the outcome of treatment. Consequently disease specific Quality of Life questionnaires have been developed to examine lower urinary tract symptoms and more recently symptoms of urogenital prolapse. We have previously documented the effect of surgery for urogenital prolapse on outcome in terms of urinary symptoms **(1)** and symptoms of urogenital prolapse **(2)**. The aim of this study was to determine whether there is a relationship between Quality of Life with respect to lower urinary tract dysfunction and symptoms of urogenital prolapse using two validated Quality of Life questionnaires in women with prolapse and concomitant urinary symptoms.

Methods

Women with symptomatic urogenital prolapse and concomitant lower urinary tract symptoms who were scheduled to undergo surgery were recruited prospectively from a tertiary referral urogynaecology clinic. They were assessed pre-operatively and again at 6 weeks post-operatively. Objective assessment of Quality of Life with respect to urinary symptoms was performed using the King Health Questionnaire (KHQ) **(3)** whilst symptoms of urogenital prolapse were examined using a validated prolapse specific Quality of Life questionnaire (pQOL) **(4)**. The domain scores for each Quality of Life questionnaire were correlated pre-operatively and post-operatively using Pearson's method (SPSS, USA).

Results

35 women were recruited to the study. All complained of symptomatic prolapse and 25 had previously undergone pelvic surgery. 10 women had a vaginal hysterectomy and pelvic floor repair whilst the remaining 25 had a pelvic floor repair alone. The correlations for each domain of the KHQ and pQol pre-operatively **(Table 1)** and post operatively **(Table 2)** are shown below.

TABLE 1: PRE-OPERATIVE KHQ AND PQOL SCORES

Quality of Life Domain	Pearson Coefficient (r)
General Health Perception (KHQ)	r = 0.837
General Health Perception (pQOL)	p = 0.000
Incontinence Impact (KHQ)	r = 0.632
Prolapse Impact (pQOL)	p = 0.001
Role Limitatons (KHQ)	r = 0.620
Role Limitations (pQOL)	p = 0.002
Physical Limitations (KHQ)	r = 0.683
Physical Limitations (pQOL)	p = 0.000
Social Limitations (KHQ)	r = 0.698
Social Limitations (pQOL)	p = 0.000
Personal Relationships (KHQ)	r = 0.762
Personal Relationships (pQOL)	p = 0.000
Emotions (KHQ)	r = 0.948
Emotions (pQOL)	p = 0.000
Sleep / Energy (KHQ)	r = 0.796
Sleep / Energy (pQOL)	p = 0.001
Severity Measures (KHQ)	r = 0.776
Severity Measures (pQOL)	p = 0.008

TABLE 2: POST-OPERATIVE KHQ AND PQOL SCORES

Quality of Life Domain	Pearson Coefficient (r)
General Health Perception (KHQ)	r = 0.611
General Health Perception (pQOL)	p = 0.046
Incontinence Impact (KHQ)	r = 0.148
Prolapse Impact (pQOL)	p = 0.527
Role Limitatons (KHQ)	r = 0.714
Role Limitations (pQOL)	p = 0.031
Physical Limitations (KHQ)	r = 0.710
Physical Limitations (pQOL)	p = 0.000
Social Limitations (KHQ)	r = 0.700
Social Limitations (pQOL)	p = 0.000
Personal Relationships (KHQ)	r = 0.278
Personal Relationships (pQOL)	p = 0.316
Emotions (KHQ)	r = 0.694
Emotions (pQOL)	p = 0.000
Sleep / Energy (KHQ)	r = 0.237
Sleep / Energy (pQOL)	p = 0.315
Severity Measures (KHQ)	r = 0.707
Severity Measures (pQOL)	p = 0.002

Conclusions

Lower urinary tract symptoms and symptoms of urogenital prolapse are known to be closely related. Surgery to correct anatomical defects may be associated with improvement, or alternatively deterioration in urinary symptoms. This study shows that there is a strong correlation between urinary Quality of Life and prolapse Quality of Life both pre-operatively and post-operatively. Whilst supporting the validity of both of these Quality of Life instruments our findings also emphasise the importance of considering urinary symptoms when evaluating patients for reconstructive pelvic surgery.

References

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3. A new questionnaire to assess the quality of life of urinary incontinent women. 1997. Br J Obstet Gynaecol; 104: 1374-1379.
4. P-QoL: A validated quality of life questionnaire for the symptomatic assessment of women with uterovaginal prolapse. Int Urogynaecol J 2000 11(1): S25.