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ORIGINAL ARTICLE

Prospective validation of the Spanish version of the Short Form-Liver Disease Quality of life[☆]

Teresa Casanovas Taltavull^{a,*}, Alejandra Chandía Frías^b,
Joan-Salvador Vilallonga Vilarmau^c, María Carmen Peña-Cala^d,
Inés de la Iglesia Vicario^e, Michael Herdman^f

^a Hepatóloga, Programa Asistencial de Hepatitis Crónicas, Unidad de Trasplante Hepático, Hospital Universitari de Bellvitge, L'Hospitalet de Llobregat, Spain

^b Psicóloga Investigadora, Institut d'Investigació Biomèdica de Bellvitge (IDIBELL), Hospital Universitari de Bellvitge, L'Hospitalet de Llobregat, Spain

^c Psicólogo Investigador, Institut d'Investigació Biomèdica de Bellvitge (IDIBELL), L'Hospitalet de Llobregat, Barcelona, Spain

^d Hepatóloga, Hospital Universitari de Bellvitge, L'Hospitalet de Llobregat, Spain

^e Enfermera, Hospital Universitari de Bellvitge, L'Hospitalet de Llobregat, Spain

^f Analista de Resultados de Estudios de Salud, Mataró, Spain

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Cirrhosis;
Validity;
Reliability

Abstract Health-related quality of life (HRQL) assessed by a specific, validated, brief test is an important measure of the health status perceived by patients diagnosed with chronic liver disease.

Aim: To prospectively validate the SF-LDQOL (Short Form-Liver Disease Quality of Life) instrument in Spanish, in patients diagnosed with liver disease of diverse etiologies and distinct severity levels, attended at the Hospital Universitari de Bellvitge (Barcelona).

Methods: This observational, longitudinal study was conducted by using the SF-LDQOL in outpatients diagnosed with chronic liver disease. This instrument contains the generic SF-36 test, and 9 liver disease-specific dimensions. We also evaluated socio-demographic features, the number of missing responses, and internal consistency (Cronbach's alpha), as well as Pearson's correlation between SF-36 and SF-LDQOL scores on specific dimensions by means of a multi-trait multi-method technique. The sample consisted of 340 patients.

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* Corresponding author.

E-mail address: teresacasanovas@bellvitgehospital.cat (T. Casanovas Taltavull).



Results: In 6 out of 9 liver disease-specific dimensions, reliability coefficients for internal consistency exceeded 0.70. The convergent validity of these items was acceptable in 8 out of 9 dimensions, with a scaling success of 100% in each item. Missing items were under 1.5% in all dimensions, except for Sexual Functioning.

Conclusions: The Spanish version of the SF-LDQOL has, in general, good psychometric properties, making it a useful instrument for clinical practice in a population of patients diagnosed with chronic liver disease, with or without liver transplantation.

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PALABRAS CLAVE

Calidad de Vida Relacionada con la Salud; Enfermedad hepática crónica; Trasplante hepático; Cirrosis; Validez; Fiabilidad

Validación prospectiva de la versión corta en español del test específico de calidad de vida *Short form-liver disease quality of life* (SF-LDQOL) para hepatopatías crónicas y trasplante hepático

Resumen La calidad de vida relacionada con la salud (CVRS) evaluada con un test específico, validado y breve es una medida importante del estado de salud percibida por los pacientes diagnosticados de hepatopatía crónica.

Objetivo: Validar de forma prospectiva el SF-LDQOL (Short Form-Liver Disease Quality of Life) en lengua española, en pacientes con hepatopatías de diversa etiología y gravedad, atendidos en el Hospital Universitari de Bellvitge.

Métodos: Estudio observacional y longitudinal, en pacientes ambulatorios con hepatopatía crónica. Se administró el SF-LDQOL, que contiene el test genérico SF-36 y el test específico SF-LDQOL. Igualmente se evaluaron las características sociodemográficas, el número de respuestas en blanco, así como la fiabilidad de la consistencia interna (alpha de Cronbach) y la correlación de Pearson entre las puntuaciones del SF-36 y las del SF-LDQOL mediante la técnica de multi-rasgo multi-método. La muestra fue de 340 pacientes.

Resultados: 6 de las 9 dimensiones específicas de enfermedad hepática obtuvieron coeficientes de fiabilidad alfa para la consistencia interna superiores a 0,7; la validez convergente de estos ítems fue aceptable en 8 de las 9 dimensiones, con un éxito de escalaje del 100%. El porcentaje de ítems en blanco fue inferior al 1,5% en todas las dimensiones excepto Funcionamiento Sexual.

Conclusiones: El SF-LDQOL en lengua española cuenta con buenas propiedades psicométricas y se convierte en un instrumento útil para la práctica clínica diaria en pacientes diagnosticados de hepatopatía crónica, con o sin trasplante hepático.

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Introduction

Chronic liver disease is one of the leading causes of morbidity and mortality in Spain. The most common aetiologies are: hepatitis B infection, hepatitis C infection and alcoholic liver disease. Other causes, such as non-alcoholic fatty liver disease, autoimmune hepatitis, primary sclerosing cholangitis, primary biliary cirrhosis, or metabolic causes, such haemochromatosis or Wilson's disease, are less common. All forms of liver disease that cannot be treated in the short- or medium-term usually become chronic, with progressive hepatic fibrosis and cirrhosis, and in some cases hepatocellular carcinoma.

Both the liver disease itself and the drugs used to treat it can affect a patient's health-related quality of life (HRQOL),¹ as has been shown in studies in fatigue among hepatitis C patients,² or in liver damage caused by excess alcohol intake.^{3–5} HRQOL is the individual's subjective feeling of well being and ability to perform activities of daily living, and. HRQOL assessment is an increasingly important outcome measure in the comprehensive management

of patients with chronic liver disease.⁶ It is measured on the basis of information provided by patients themselves, who are in the best position to report their symptoms and the limitations these cause. A good HRQOL is now a target outcome following treatment to prolong survival in several diseases, including chronic liver disease and liver transplant,⁷ and interest in this instrument is growing. In one of the few studies exploring whether quality of life scores can predict survival, Gao et al.⁸ found that the short form 36-item HRQOL questionnaire (SF-36) can predict survival in patients with chronic liver disease.

Using HRQOL to evaluate patients with chronic liver disease can have a positive effect on quality of life by improving therapeutic compliance in some groups,⁹ and establishing better communication between patients and medical staff.

HRQOL questionnaires are divided into 2 categories: generic and specific. Among the generic questionnaires, the SF-36 is the most frequently used.^{10–12} Another HRQOL questionnaire, the SF-12, an abbreviated version of the SF-36, has been used to evaluate quality of life in patients with liver disease.¹³ Specific questionnaires focus, as the name

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