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Correlation between quality of life and disease severity in children with atopic dermatitis in the State of Qatar

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Correlation between quality of life and disease severity in children with atopic dermatitis in the state of Qatar Background: Atopic dermatitis (AD) is an itchy, chronic or chronically relapsing, inflammatory skin condition which is most prevalent in childhood. It is known to affect 10-20% of children. The prevalence of AD has increased during the past 3 decades and is probably due to modification of lifestyles and environment. Atopic dermatitis (AD) can affect the behavior, life and development of children. Little is known regarding the effect of AD on the quality of life (QoL) in children of the Gulf region and especially in the state of Qatar. Objectives: To study the impact of AD on the QoL in children and its relation to disease severity in the state of Qatar. Methods: This study was conducted on 45 patients with atopic dermatitis aged from 5 to 16 years who attended the outpatient clinic of the Dermatology Department, Rummilah and Al Khor Hospitals, Hamad Medical Corporation, Doha, Qatar. The UK diagnostic criteria of AD were used for the diagnosis of atopic dermatitis. Disease severity was assessed using modified SCORAD (SCORing Atopic Dermatitis) measuring only objective criteria. The Children Dermatology Life Quality Index (CDLQI) was used to quantify the impact of AD on children's quality of life. SPSS 14.0 statistical package has been used for the analysis. Correlation coefficient (Pearson) was calculated to see associations between variables. Results: There were a positive significant correlation between objective SCORAD and each question from 1 to 10 as well as the total score of CDLQI except for question 2, the strongest relation between objective SCORAD and CDLQI was found in question 1 (symptoms) and question 9 (sleep). It was statistically evident that as the SCORAD index increases the CDLQI increases. Conclusion: The study has shown adverse effects of AD on children QoL especially on symptoms and feelings and a positive correlation between CDLQI and modified SCORAD which denote the effect of AD on the lives and development of children. We recommend the use of CDLQI in research work as an additional subjective measure to the clinical objective scoring tools used in chronic skin diseases. Health economists and caregivers should put the impact of skin diseases (non-life threatening diseases) on the QoL of patients, especially children and its implications for psychology, development, social functioning and school outcome.