

HEALTH RELATED QUALITY OF LIFE OF CHILDREN WITH JUVENILE CHRONIC ARTHRITIS

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The DUCATQOL is a generic 32-item self-report questionnaire, designed to measure the health related quality of life (HRQOL) of school-aged children. The concept HRQOL is defined as the children's affective evaluation of different aspects of their daily functioning. The items cover four domains: physical, emotional, social and school functioning. In this study 50 children with juvenile chronic arthritis (JCA) (mean age 10.5, SD 4.5, 68% pauciarticular) receiving clinical care in the Leiden University Medical Centre completed the questionnaire. The DUCATQOL proved to be understandable, internally consistent (α 0.91) and reproducible ($r=0.90$). Children with JCA reported significant lower scores than a reference group of healthy peers on the physical ($F=13.19$, $p<0.001$) and the emotional scale ($F=5.62$, $p=0.02$). Girls evaluated their physical condition lower than boys ($F=5.79$, $p=0.01$). Early onset of the JCA (before age 5) resulted in a lower score on the social scale ($F=5.78$ $p=0.27$). Disease type (pauciarticular or polyarticular) did not influence the subjective evaluation of the HRQOL. In conclusion: Children with JCA reported a lower HRQOL on different domains of their daily functioning.