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Quality of life among Saudi diabetics

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Aim of study: To assess QOL among Saudi diabetics and to identify the possible risk factors associated with lower QOL.

Patients and Methods: This study comprised 400 diabetic patients attending the Diabetes Clinic at the University Diabetes Center in Riyadh. They were interviewed using the Audit of Diabetes Dependent QOL (ADDQOL).

Results: Most diabetic patients (78.7%) had negative (i.e., unfavorable) ADDQOL scores. Diabetic patients' age, education and occupation were not significantly associated with their QOL. Female patients had significantly worse QOL than male patients ($p=0.026$). Married patients had significantly worse QOL compared with non-married patients ($p=0.012$). Patients with type 2 diabetes had significantly worse QOL than those with type 1 diabetes ($p=0.029$). Duration of diabetes was not significant factors as regard their QOL, with the worst QOL among those with more than 20 years of diabetes. The degree of diabetes control was significantly and directly associated with QOL score ($p<0.001$). The worst QOL was expressed among poorly controlled diabetes while the best was among patients with excellent control. QOL of diabetics was less among those who had diabetes complications, i.e., neuropathy ($p=0.03$), retinopathy ($p<0.001$), and diabetic foot ($p=0.031$). However, difference was not significant according to those with nephropathy.

Conclusions: QOL of Saudi adult diabetic patients is not favorable. Personal characteristics associated with worse QOL among diabetics include female gender, and being married. Disease characteristics associated with worse QOL include being a type 2 diabetic and those with uncontrolled diabetes. Main complications associated with worse QOL among diabetics include retinopathy, diabetic foot and neuropathy.

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