

[2010] [FRI0473] HEALTH-RELATED QUALITY OF LIFE AFTER TOTAL KNEE OR HIP REPLACEMENT: A 7-YEAR PROSPECTIVE STUDY

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Objectives: Arthritic conditions are extremely painful for the patient and are associated with a significant reduction in health related quality of life (HRQOL), mainly in term of physical and functional impairment. Therefore, the demand for total joint replacement (TJR) is increasing as patients gain substantial pain relief and increased mobility and HRQOL, at least over a short-term period. However, few long-term studies are available. The objective of the present study was to assess the long-term effect of TJR on HRQOL.

Methods: We conducted a prospective study with 7 years of follow-up. Patients experiencing a TJR at the level of the hip or the knee because of arthritic condition were eligible for this study. Generic HRQOL was assessed with the Short-Form 36 (SF36) and specific HRQOL with the Western Ontario and McMaster Universities Osteoarthritis Index (WOMAC). These questionnaires were administered preoperatively and after 3 months, 6 months and 7 years of follow-up.

Results: Out of the 65 subjects included in this study, 45 (69.2%) completed all follow-up visits. Preoperative characteristics, including age, sex, body mass index, number of co-morbidities and reason for TJR, were not significantly different between completer and non-completer groups. Patients who completed all visits were aged (mean \pm SD) 64.2 ± 12.6 years, have a body mass index of 27.6 ± 4.1 and were predominantly women (75.6%). Out of the 45 subjects, 26 (57.8%) experienced a hip replacement surgery. Six months after surgery, there was a significant improvement, compared to preoperative score, in 3 of the 8 dimensions of the SF-36 (i.e. physical function, role-physical and pain). Surprisingly, there was a significant worsening in the general health dimensions of the SF-36. After 6 months of follow-up, pain and physical function dimensions of the WOMAC were significantly improved but there was no significant change in the stiffness score. Changes in SF-36 scores from month 6 to 7 years showed a significant improvement in physical function ($p < 0.001$), role-physical ($p < 0.001$), role-emotional ($p < 0.01$) and pain ($p < 0.05$). From month 6 to year 7, all scores of the WOMAC improved ($p < 0.001$ for pain, $p < 0.001$ for stiffness and $p < 0.01$ for physical function).

Conclusion: The improvement observed in HRQOL over a short-term period after surgery is at least maintained over a 7-year follow-up period.

Disclosure of Interest: None declared

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