

## QUALITY OF LIFE AND SEVERITY OF FATIGUE IN PATIENTS WITH SYSTEMIC LUPUS ERYTHEMATOSUS

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In order to assess adequately the success of treatment in patients with systemic lupus erythematosus (SLE), it is necessary to evaluate their quality of life and severity of fatigue. This study aimed to investigate the quality of life of SLE patients, severity of fatigue they experience, and correlations between disease activity, organ damage and quality of life. The study involved 85 patients with SLE in whom the diagnosis was made based on the revised 1997 ACR criteria and 30 healthy examinees. The disease activity was assessed using the Systemic Lupus Erythematosus Disease Activity Index (SLEDAI), organ damage was evaluated using the SLICC/ACR damage index (SDI), quality of life using the Medical Outcome Survey Short Form 36 (SF-36), and severity of fatigue using the Fatigue Severity Scale. The quality of life of SLE patients measured with SF-36 was significantly lower than that in healthy individuals ( $p < 0.001$ ) and in most of the surveyed domains was not correlated with disease activity. The domain of physical functions in SLE patients demonstrated poorer results compared to mental functions, and the average results were below 52% in all SF-36 domains. Poorer quality of life was associated with a higher organ damage index (SDI), with the exception of emotional status domain. There was a significant difference in the severity of fatigue between SLE patients and controls ( $p < 0.001$ ). Fatigue was positively correlated with organ damage ( $p < 0.01$ ), and was not correlated with disease activity. Quality of life and severity of fatigue are associated more with organ damage than with disease activity in SLE patients.

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