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ASSESSMENT OF QUALITY OF LIFE IN OVER-80 PATIENTS UNDERGOING CARDIO-SURGERY: IS IT FEASIBLE?

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**Introduction:** Cardiovascular disorders are the first cause of death among over-80 year-old patients and cardio-surgery is sometimes the one therapeutic option. No scientific assessment of Quality of Life (QoL) or other psycho-socially relevant consequences has been carried out. Aim of the study was to quantify and describe QoL on over-80 patients after cardio-surgery.

**Methods:** Study 1 was a one-arm cohort study on 192 subjects who underwent cardio-surgery between years 2003 and 2005 and were interviewed by phone 5 to 7 years after by means of SF-36 and the Seattle Angina Questionnaire, matching these with socio-demographics and clinical pre/post operative variables. Study 2 was a pre-post study on 21 subjects who underwent cardio-surgery in 2009-2010, who were interviewed face-to-face before the interventions and 6 months after, including assessment of anxiety and depression via the HADS.

**Results:** Study 1 patients reported satisfaction with treatment in 80%, freedom from cardiac symptoms in 62% and overall well-being in 78% of cases. Study 2 patients reported statistically significant improvement of QoL (SF-36 mean total score 57.1 vs. 73.5,  $p=.001$ ), clinical conditions and anxiety-depressive symptoms ( $p=.001$  both for HADS-anxiety and HADS-depression).

**Conclusions:** Assessment of QoL and anxiety-depressive symptoms should be included in routine evaluation of elderly surgical patients, though the present study also suggested the need for improvement of methodology of interview, being phone-calling and traditional self-assessment psychometric instruments particularly inappropriate for this patient population.