Quality of Life in Patients with Atrial Fibrillation

Pui-Yee Sin, Chu-Pak Lau, Hung-Fat Tse

From Cardiology Division, Department of Medicine, Queen Mary Hospital, The University of Hong Kong, Hong Kong SAR

ABSTRACT
Atrial fibrillation (AF) is one of the most common symptomatic cardiac arrhythmia and is associated with substantial complications and health care cost. Although AF is not an immediately life threatening disease, it is associated with significant symptoms, and thus impairment of quality of life (QoL). Therefore, one of the major assessments for treatment outcome in AF patients is improvement of QoL. Current available data do suggest that patients with AF have markedly impairment of QoL compared to healthy controls and patients with other cardiovascular diseases. In the majority of AF patients, rate or rhythm control appears to provide similar benefit on QoL. However, in highly symptomatic AF patients, successful nonpharmacological rhythm-control might yield the largest improvement in QoL. Future studies are required to compare QoL in different patient populations, different types of AF and different therapeutic approaches in patients with AF. Furthermore, the development and validation of a more disease-specific QoL instrument for AF can improve the measurement of health status in patients with AF. (J HK Coll Cardiol 2005;13:10-15)

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