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THE QUALITY OF LIFE OF PATIENTS SUFFERING FROM SCHIZOPHRENIA - A COMPARISON WITH HEALTHY CONTROLS

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Background: In the past, the first goal of schizophrenia treatment was to reduce psychotic symptoms, mainly positive symptoms. Recently, as a result of an emphasis on patient needs, the concept of quality of life (QoL) has been brought into the treatment. The goal has therefore changed from the alleviation of symptoms to improvement of the patient's satisfaction with social activities. Self-evaluations by people with schizophrenia were previously thought to lack reliability because of the presence of psychopathological symptoms and poor awareness of the disease. Recently the importance of evaluating the satisfaction of patients themselves, however, has been recognized in schizophrenia. Studies on this field showed us, that QoL data from patients with chronic mental illness were reliable and concluded that subjective QoL evaluation was applicable to such patients.

Aims: The purpose of the present study was to compare the QoL in patients suffering from schizophrenia in clinical remission with healthy controls and examine the extent of the effects of subjective cognitive functioning on QoL in these patients.

Methods: Data were obtained using the quality of life questionnaire (Quality of Life Enjoyment and Satisfaction - Q-LES-Q), and subjective questionnaire for cognitive dysfunction (Cognitive Failures Questionnaire - CFQ) for 40 schizophrenia patients in clinical remission and 40 healthy controls.

Results: Cognitive function correlates negatively with subjective QoL in patients with schizophrenia.