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## RESIDENTS' FORUM

### Quality of Life in Nonmelanoma Skin Cancer<sup>☆</sup>

### FR-Calidad de vida en cáncer cutáneo no melanoma

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#### KEYWORDS

Nonmelanoma skin cancer;  
Basal cell carcinoma;  
Squamous cell carcinoma;  
Quality of life;  
Questionnaires

#### PALABRAS CLAVE

Cáncer cutáneo no melanoma;  
Carcinoma basocelular;  
Carcinoma escamocelular;  
Calidad de vida;  
Cuestionarios

Studies on quality of life (QOL) have become increasingly common in dermatology due to the major social, familial, occupational, and psychological effects that skin diseases have on patients.<sup>1</sup>

Nonmelanoma skin cancer (NMSC) is the most common malignancy in humans. The incidence of NMSC has increased in recent years, affecting a younger population. Although

the mortality rate is low, the treatment of NMSC is associated with high morbidity. Eighty percent of NMSC tumors are located on the head or neck, and an estimated 40% of patients who develop their first NMSC also develop at least 1 additional tumor within 2 years of diagnosis.<sup>2</sup> NMSC is therefore considered to be a chronic, mutilating disease with great potential to leave cosmetic, functional, and emotional sequelae; hence the particular relevance of the QOL concept.

In recent decades, various questionnaires have been used to study QOL in patients with NMSC. The most common questionnaires used in dermatology (Skindex and the Dermatology Life Quality Index, which are oriented towards benign and symptomatic diseases), the questionnaires used in oncology (Functional Assessment of Cancer Therapy–General), and generic questionnaires have low sensitivity for the assessment of QOL in patients with NMSC. Hence, specific tools that take into account the peculiar characteristics of NMSC have been developed to assess QOL in patients with this disease. Specifically, the Skin Cancer Quality of Life Impact Tool (SCQOLIT) and the Skin Cancer Index (SCI) are specific questionnaires that have been shown to be valid and reliable in patients with NMSC.

The SCQOLIT was developed in English for patients with nonmetastatic skin cancers, including melanoma.<sup>3</sup> Despite having been validated, this 10-item questionnaire currently has just 2 references in the literature and has not been adapted into Spanish.

The SCI is a 15-item questionnaire developed specifically for NMSC that assesses 3 domains of QOL (emotional, social,

<sup>☆</sup> Please cite this article as: García-Montero P, de Gálvez-Aranda MV, Martín MdT. FR-Calidad de vida en cáncer cutáneo no melanoma. Actas Dermosifiliogr. 2018;109:649–650.

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and appearance).<sup>4</sup> This questionnaire has been used in multiple studies in populations of various nationalities, with excellent results. The Spanish version of the SCI was recently validated and was shown to have excellent psychometric properties.<sup>5</sup> For this transcultural adaptation of the questionnaire, the number of items was reduced to 12 and the 3 original QOL domains were grouped into 2 domains (appearance/social aspects and emotional aspects).

Impact on QOL is one of the most important aspects of NMSC; therefore, this aspect should be given the importance it deserves in clinical practice. The use of QOL questionnaires makes it possible to understand this dimension and facilitates a comprehensive approach to care for patients with NMSC. The fact that a specific validated tool is currently available in Spanish represents a major advance that facilitates this task considerably.

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