

# Hyperhidrosis Quality of Life Measures: Review and Patient Perspective

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## INTRODUCTION

Primary hyperhidrosis has no discernible cause and is characterised by uncontrollable excessive and unpredictable sweating, which occurs at rest, regardless of temperature. The symptoms of hyperhidrosis can significantly affect quality of life, and can lead to social embarrassment, loneliness, anxiety and depression.

The aim of this literature review was to identify the tools that have been used to measure quality of life in studies of hyperhidrosis. Patient advisors commented on four of the quality of life tools and provided insight and perspective.

## METHODS

Twelve databases were searched in January 2016 to identify studies of hyperhidrosis. The search strategies combined topic terms for hyperhidrosis with a recognised search filter for “quality of life”. All studies that reported measuring quality of life or described a quality of life measure/tool in the context of primary hyperhidrosis were included. Information on the tools and their use in hyperhidrosis research was summarised in a narrative synthesis. Patient advisors contributed to the interpretation of the findings.

## RESULTS

The review included 184 studies, many of which used multiple tools to assess quality of life. Twenty-two individual tools were identified. The review identified disease specific, dermatology specific, and general health/utility tools. The quality of life tools that were used in more than one study are presented in **Table 1**. The tools used most commonly in hyperhidrosis research were the Hyperhidrosis Disease Severity Scale (HDSS), the Dermatology Life Quality Index

Table 1: Quality of life tools used in multiple hyperhidrosis studies

Tool	Acronym	Number of studies
<b>Hyperhidrosis-specific tools</b>		
Hyperhidrosis Disease Severity Scale	HDSS	65
Hyperhidrosis Quality of Life Questionnaire	HQLQ	31
Keller Hyperhidrosis Scale		10
Hyperhidrosis Impact Questionnaire	HHIQ	8
Amir et al. disease-specific health-related questionnaire for hyperhidrosis		5
Hyperhidrosis Quality of Life Index	HidroQoL	3
Hyperhidrosis Questionnaire	HQ	2
<b>Dermatology-specific tools</b>		
Dermatology Quality of Life Index	DLQI	48
Skindex		6
<b>Non-disease specific tools</b>		
Medical Outcomes Study Short Form 36	SF-36	13
Medical Outcomes Study Short Form 12	SF-12	7
Illness Intrusiveness Rating Scale	IIRS	2

(DLQI) and the Hyperhidrosis Quality of Life Questionnaire (HQLQ). These tools were often used in combination, with the HDSS and DLQI frequently being used together. The Hyperhidrosis Quality of Life index (HidroQoL<sup>®</sup>) was recently designed and validated and therefore its only identified use was in its validation study.

These quality of life tools were sent to four patient advisors prior to a workshop held at a district hospital, along with a short list of questions about the tools. At the workshop all patient advisors agreed that

it is essential to assess quality of life and that measuring the actual amount of sweat produced should only be considered as a secondary outcome. They also agreed that the HidroQoL<sup>®</sup> tool covered disease-specific quality of life dimensions relevant to them most comprehensively and was easy to complete. The DLQI was considered to be too general and too focussed on the skin. The HDSS was considered to be too basic and not sufficiently discriminating.

## CONCLUSIONS

The most commonly used tools for assessing quality of life in hyperhidrosis research were the HDSS, the DLQI and the HQLQ. All patient advisors agreed that the HidroQoL<sup>®</sup> tool was superior to the other commonly used tools. The results of this research indicate that future studies of the effectiveness of interventions for hyperhidrosis would benefit from including a hyperhidrosis-specific quality of life tool, such as the HidroQoL<sup>®</sup> tool, favoured by our patient advisors.

### References

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### Study registration

The protocol was registered on PROSPERO (registration number: CRD42015027803).

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