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Association of disease knowledge level and quality of life in patients with Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease

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Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease (COPD) is a leading cause of mortality and the loss of disability-adjusted life years worldwide. COPD also leads to a reduced Quality of Life (QoL). Various studies have evaluated the risk factors affecting QoL in patients with COPD. However, the relationship between COPD knowledge level and QoL has not been examined. This study thus evaluated this relationship. This cross-sectional study was conducted between March 2010 and November 2010. A total of 191 patients with a wide range of severity of COPD were recruited from the pulmonology outpatient clinics of six institutions in Korea. The subjects' general QoL measure (SF-36), disease-specific QoL measure (the St. George's Respiratory Questionnaire, SGRQ), and Bristol COPD Knowledge Questionnaire (BCKQ) were collected. COPD knowledge was correlated with the general QoL, but not with the disease-specific QoL. The BCKQ score was moderately correlated with the physical (SF-36 PCS) and mental (SF-36 MCS) component summaries ($r = 0.390$ and $r = 0.396$, respectively), but not with the SGRQ ($P = 0.979$). The SF-36 score was more strongly correlated in the severe stages of COPD ($r = 0.422$). The COPD patients with greater disease knowledge had a better general QoL, but COPD disease knowledge was not associated with the disease-specific QoL.

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