

## Older age and health-related quality of life in patients with inflammatory bowel diseases

### Starija dob i kvaliteta života u bolesnika s upalnim bolestima crijeva

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**Introduction:** Inflammatory bowel diseases (IBD) are chronic, remitting conditions that primarily affect young patients. However, it is well-known that there is a second, smaller peak of incidence during the fifth to seventh decades of life. Older age and comorbidities not only bring considerable difficulties in managing IBD but also result in different patient perceptions and therapeutic goals. Data regarding the quality of life (QOL) among elderly IBD patients are lacking. Therefore, we aim to compare the QOL between elderly and young IBD patients.

**Methods:** Consecutive IBD patients from the outpatient clinic at the Sestre milosrdnice University Hospital Center were invited to anonymously complete multiple mixed-methods (quantitative/qualitative) Quality of Life questionnaires (including SF-36, IMPACT, SIDBQ, IBD disk) from October 10th, 2019, until February 15th, 2020. Ordinal data were compared using the Mann-Whitney U test, and categorical variables were analyzed using the Fisher exact test.

**Results:** A total of 156 patients were analyzed with main characteristics shown in Table 1. There were no statistically significant differences between the groups in any of the 10 assessed items from the IBD disk. However, elderly patients expressed greater concern that their condition would worsen ( $p=0.05$ ) and reported lower scores in questions related to the impact of the disease on physical activity when compared to younger patients. Their disease prevented them from: engaging in heavy physical activities ( $p<0.01$ ); hindered them from participating in moderate physical activities ( $p=0.03$ ); made it difficult for them to reach the 2nd floor without taking a break ( $p=0.05$ ); made it challenging for them to carry a shopping bag from the grocery store ( $p=0.03$ ).

TABLE 1. A TOTAL OF 156 PATIENTS WERE ANALYZED WITH MAIN CHARACTERISTICS

	<65 years old (N=142)	>65 years old (N=14)
Age	35 (24-49)	68 (65-70)
Male gender	71 (50%)	5 (57.1%)
BMI	24.2 (21.5-27.6)	27.6 (24.2-29.1)
UC	66 (46.5%)	9 (64.3%)
Treated with biologics	73 (51.4%)	4 (28.6%)

**Conclusion:** Senior IBD patients' distinct priorities should be specifically addressed in consultations. Emphasizing mobility, frailty assessment, and education about the significance of exercise is essential for this group of patients.