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Title: Evolution of quality of life (CAT and CCQ) after a COPD exacerbation

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Body: INTRODUCTION: COPD exacerbations have a negative impact on lung function, increase risk of death and decrease quality of life (QoL). The objective of this study was to assess the evolution in QoL after and ambulatory or severe exacerbation in patients with COPD. METHODS: this is an epidemiological, prospective and multicenter study that has been performed in 79 hospitals and primary care centers in Spain. 476 COPD patients filled CAT and CCQ questionnaires during the 24 hours after the presentation in the hospital or in primary care centers with symptoms of an exacerbation and after 4-6 weeks. Only those patients who recovered from the exacerbation at that time continued in the study. RESULTS: 164 (33.7%) and 322 (66.3%) patients were included in the study when they suffered an ambulatory and a severe exacerbation respectively. The majority were men (88.2%), 69.4 years (SD=9.5) and mean FEV1 (%) was 47.7% (17.4%). During the exacerbation, patients presented high scores in CAT: [22,0 (7,0)] and CCQ: [4,4 (1,2)]. After recovery there was a significant reduction in both questionnaires [CAT: -9,9 (5,1) and CCQ: -3,1 (1,1)]. Both questionnaires presented a strong correlation during and after the exacerbation and the best predictor of the magnitude of improvement was the severity of the score at onset. CONCLUSIONS: Due to its good correlation, CAT and CCQ can be useful tools to measure QoL during an exacerbation and to evaluate the recovery because they are not influenced by other factors.