Non-pharmacologic Intensive Interdisciplinary Pain Treatment in Pediatrics: Impact on Health-related Quality of Life

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Objectives: To assess non-pharmacologic treatment outcomes pertaining to health-related quality of life (HRQoL) in youth with chronic idiopathic pain and their families.

Methods: We conducted a retrospective cohort study of 115 youth with chronic idiopathic pain enrolled in a non-pharmacologic, hospital-based intensive interdisciplinary pain treatment (IIPT) program. HRQoL measures for the patient (Pediatric Quality of Life Inventory [PedsQL] short form) and family unit (PedsQL Family Impact) were collected on admission and discharge as part of routine clinical care. Changes in PedsQL scores were calculated using the Wilcoxon signed-rank test. Multivariable linear regression was used to explore factors associated with patient-level HRQoL.

Results: Both individuals and the family unit reported that their HRQoL improved in all domains by program completion. Improvements in pain and allodynia were present for program participants at the time of completion as well as at the 3-month follow-up, suggesting durability of these effects.

Conclusions: A non-pharmacologic IIPT program is a compelling treatment for pediatric and adolescent chronic idiopathic pain, for both patients and the family unit. Patients participating in this program had positive treatment outcomes with significantly improved subjective and objective measures of physical, emotional, social, and cognitive function.

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