

Another PROM That Children as Well as Adults Can Use to Monitor Their Chronic Disease



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Chronic urticaria is a complex disease that frequently exhibits a fluctuating clinical course. Patient-reported outcome measures (PROMs) are highly valuable tools with which the activity of the target disease can be serially assessed.¹ However, medical diagnostic instruments are often developed and available for adult patients only, as they are not validated for all age groups. A study of 52 children with chronic urticaria appearing in this issue of the journal by Prosty et al² provides validation for the Urticaria Control Test (UCT),³ a PROM for assessing disease activity and response to treatment in chronic urticaria that was previously validated in adults.

Initially PROMs were developed for research purposes in clinical trials,⁴ but in the past few decades, the patients' perspective has been recognized as a fundamental and indispensable tool in medical diagnosis and treatment. PROMs have become increasingly important in medicine as they capture the impact of a disease, allow patients to better monitor their own disease, facilitate better patient-health care provider communication, and can serve to increase patient satisfaction.⁴

Applicability of such tests across all age groups is an important unmet need, as PROMs also encourage better monitoring of disease activity and comparison of varied conditions and settings. However, of course, an exception to this suggestion would be if the tests are specific for a certain population such as the productivity index, which would not be relevant for children and senior citizens. Ideally, these instruments should be identical for adults and children, and are particularly valuable for chronic disease monitoring, as well as in times of transition from pediatric to adult care.

The prevalence of chronic spontaneous urticaria is high and rising across all age groups.⁵ Until recently, only the urticaria activity score PROM could be applied across all age groups, which is not the case for other outcome measures.^{1,6} PROMs are

essential for optimizing the management of chronic urticaria by providing information on disease activity, impact, and control, as well as future treatment options. According to the latest urticaria guideline, PROMs and particularly the UCT are used to decide on the necessity to step up or step down in the treatment algorithm.¹

The study by Prosty et al² shows that the same questions in UCT that can be used for adults can also be applied for children, and is an important step in the right direction for the treatment of chronic urticaria. This study highlights the need for more frequent use of PROMs for the management of chronic urticaria in children and adults. Further such tools should be developed, or existing tools should also be validated in children.

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