

QUALITY OF LIFE FOLLOWING THYROIDECTOMY

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Background/Purpose: Thyroid surgery may affect quality of life (QOL). Previous studies have examined this using non-specific questionnaires, but none have documented the effect using thyroid-specific QOL-measures, which may be more sensitive to important changes. The aim of the present study was to compare differences in QOL between patients who underwent complete vs. unilateral thyroidectomy.

Methods: Patients who underwent thyroidectomy at a university-affiliated tertiary medical center between July 2011 and June 2012 were asked to complete the validated Thyroid-specific ThyPRO QOL questionnaire between 3 - 6 months following surgery. QOL parameters were compared between patients who underwent complete thyroidectomy and unilateral thyroid lobectomy.

Results: Ninety-eight patients completed the ThyPRO questionnaire during the study period. Fifty-two (54%) underwent complete thyroidectomy and 46 unilateral thyroid lobectomy (46%). There was no statistically significant difference in all QOL parameter tested by the questionnaire between the two groups.

Discussion & Conclusion: Surprisingly the Thyroid-specific ThyPro QOL questionnaire showed no difference in QOL between patients who underwent complete thyroidectomy and unilateral thyroid lobectomy. These findings might serve as an important tool in decision making regarding the extent of surgery in low risk patients with well differentiated thyroid cancer. However, with this sample size, only very large differences in QOL could be identified, so caution regarding the strength of this conclusion is warranted and future studies in larger samples are required to further evaluate this issue.