



Quality of life after Lymph Node Transfer for the treatment of chronic lymphedema – A prospective study

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Introduction: In modern medicine, improving the patients' quality of life (QOL) is very important. The aim of the study is to prospectively examine the QOL after free/microvascular lymph node transplantation (FLNT). Chronic lymphedema often means a lifelong, very costly conservative therapy with significant impairment of QOL. The FLNT represents a significant alternative. This gives us the reason to check the reproducibility of this method and results.

Material and Methods: A total of 51 patients met the criteria for participation and underwent a FLNT between June 2013 and December 2017. 39 patients completed T0 and T1 (at least 1 year postoperatively). The testing instruments consisted of a self-developed indication specific questionnaire. In addition, we used the FLZM, FPI-R-L, RES, PHQ-4, FLQA-te, FLQA-b, FLQA-k and FLQA-l. All of them are standardized, validated and widely used questionnaires. Most of them can be compared to norm data. The paired and unpaired t-test were used. The threshold for statistical significance was set at $p < 0.05$.

Results: 3% of the study participants are male, 97% female, the median age was 48.5 years. For example, the self-developed questionnaires revealed a significant reduction in the number of lymph drainage therapy per week ($p = 0.003$) as well as other factors. The FLZM revealed several significant improvements. The FPI-R-L provided an improvement from pre- to postoperative, but not significant. The RES showed an improved self-confidence of the patients ($p = 0.566$). Improved scores were also found on the PHQ-4 depression scale.

Conclusions: The FLNT has a positive influence on the perception of the patients' QOL. The good scores in the self-developed indication-specific questionnaires correlate with those in the standardized and validated questionnaires

Biography: Christian Krammer is a medical student at the Ludwig Maximilian University of Munich (LMU) and a doctoral candidate at the Technical University of Munich (TUM). He has two Bachelor degrees: Bachelor of Arts with Honours (BA Hons) in Business Administration (The Open University, Milton Keynes, United Kingdom) and Bachelor of Arts (B.A.) in Economics (Management in Commerce) (Baden-Wuerttemberg Cooperative State University Mannheim). He completed his business studies in cooperation with Saturn Management GmbH. Prior to his medical studies, he worked as an associate at KPMG AG Wirtschaftsprüfungsgesellschaft.

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