Background: Pemphigus vulgaris is an autoimmune bullous disease that mainly affects the skin and mucous membranes. It has the ability to affect patient’s quality of life because of the pain, itchness and cosmesis. There are many tools to evaluate quality of life in patient with pemphigus but Autoimmune Bullous Disease Quality of Life Questionnaire (ABQOL) is a specific tool used in patient with bullous disease.

Objective: To evaluate the impact of pemphigus vulgaris on patients’ quality of life.

Tool: A validated ABQOL questionnaire (Deshan FS, 2013) consists of 17 questions with a total score of 51 and it assesses patient’s perception of severity of his skin lesions such as pain, itch, healing, clothing changes, bathing or showering, pain in the mouth, gingival bleeding, food avoidance, embarrassment, depression, anxiety, family and friends, sexual activity, relationship, social life, work and study, and discrimination.

Method: All patients who were diagnosed with pemphigus vulgaris were recruited and interviewed at Selayang Hospital Dermatology clinic or ward from April till August 2015. ABQOL was used to evaluate each patient’s quality of life. Data were analyzed reported as mean ± standard deviation or median ± IQR.

Results: The study sample consisted of 20 patients with a mean age of 54.4 ± 15.8. The overall ABQOL mean score was 20.00 ± 11.50. Majority of the patients perceived their skin lesions as severe. Majority were inconvenient by their illness because of difficulty in self cleansing (80%), having to change their clothes often (65%), and difficulty in enjoying food (65%). Psychosocially, some felt depressed (70%), felt embarrassed (70%), felt anxious (55%) and had sexual difficulties (20%) as a result of their illness. 70% had to reduce their social function due to the disease and 55% were unable to carry out their daily chores, study or work.

Table 1 Demographic characteristics (n = 20)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>n (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Age, Mean ± SD</td>
<td>54.4 ± 15.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gender</td>
<td>Male 9 (45%), Female 11 (55%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Race</td>
<td>Malay 9 (45%), Chinese 5 (25%), Indian 6 (30%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Compliance (MMS score), Median ± IQR</td>
<td>1.50 ± 2.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Duration of disease (years), Median ± IQR</td>
<td>3 ± 5.75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disease Activity (PDAI score)</td>
<td>Activity Score, Median ± IQR 4.0 ± 7.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Damage Score, Mean ± SD</td>
<td>6.58 ± 3.71</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Quality of Life (ABQOL score), Median ± IQR: 20 ± 11.50

Abbreviations: PDAI: Pemphigus Disease area Index; MMS: Modified Monksky Scale; SD: Standard Deviation; IQR: Interquartile Range

Discussion: According to Terrab et al, physical and emotional status were badly affected by pemphigus. 70% were embarrassed, 60% were anxious and 63% loss their confidence that concur with our findings.

However, only 20% of our patients were affected sexually as compared to 81% in Morocco population. Paradisi et al. mentioned that 39.7% of the pemphigus patients in Italy were associated with minor nonpsychotic psychiatric conditions.

Evaluation by a single center is the limitation of this study. The impact of pemphigus vulgaris on ABQOL of patients is clearly shown using ABQOL questionnaire.

Conflicts of Interest Disclosures: None reported

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References

Fig 1 Treatment regimen

Fig 2 Number of patients affected according to different aspect of QOL and total ABQOL score per item (0-60)

Discussion: These patients perceived pemphigus vulgaris as a severe skin condition limiting the daily activities that decreases their quality of life was affected in various ways.