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# Health and functional status in oral potentially malignant disorders: a questionnaire-based study

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## ABSTRACT

**Background and Objective:** Oral potentially malignant disorders (OPMDs) are a group of oral mucosal abnormalities with an increased risk of malignant transformation. Their high prevalence, especially in Asia, poses a significant public health concern. Beyond disease control, understanding the impact of OPMDs on patients' health-related quality of life (HRQoL) is essential for guiding treatment decisions and optimizing care. This study aimed to identify factors that could affect HRQoL in patients with oral potentially malignant disorders in the local population.

**Methods:** A cross-sectional study was conducted over 8 months at Ziauddin University and Abbasi Shaheed Hospitals, enrolling 83 patients aged >20 years with clinically and histologically confirmed Oral Potentially Malignant Disorders. Patients with other medical conditions or prior treatments were excluded. Written informed consent was obtained. HRQoL was assessed using the SF-36 questionnaire across eight domains. ANOVA was used to compare HRQoL domains, and Pearson's correlation tested associations between variables. A  $p$ -value < 0.05 was considered statistically significant.

**Result:** Actinic cheilitis was the most common lesion, predominantly affecting patients aged 51-60 years. Physical health was the most impaired HRQoL domain ( $p = 0.001$ ), while mental health was the least affected ( $p = 0.02$ ). Patients  $\geq 40$  years reported poorer physical health, whereas those aged 41-50 experienced greater mental health and activity limitations. Pain showed a positive correlation with social health ( $r = 0.426$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ) and a negative correlation with emotional health ( $r = -0.291$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ). Mental and emotional health were strongly correlated ( $r = 0.741$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ).

**Conclusion:** OPMDs significantly impair HRQoL, particularly physical health and daily functioning. Pain adversely affects social and emotional well-being, while mental and emotional health are closely linked. Findings highlight the need for targeted HRQoL assessment and patient-centered care to optimize outcomes.

**Keywords:** Quality of life, health impact, oral potentially malignant disorders, physical health, mental health.

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