Symptoms and Quality of Life in Allergy and Obstructive Airway Diseases.

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Background
Patients suffering from chronic diseases, such as allergy and asthma, have an impaired Quality of Life (QoL). Evaluation of symptoms and Quality of Life is usually performed, for both research purposes and in clinical practice, by using standard validated questionnaires.

Aim/Objectives
The project focuses on investigating less examined aspects of this already known impairment of QoL using additional methods other than the standard questionnaires. The aim is also to associate to grade of airway obstruction, specifically in the peripheral airways, and co-morbidities.

Methods
Our project is divided into three main parts: 
A) Objective measurements (cognitive tests) as a compliment to self-reports regarding cognitive dysfunction due to pollen allergy
B) In-depth interviews of patients with severe asthma as a complement in assessing the impact of the disease on quality of life and identifying factors that are not captured by the standard questionnaires
C) The degree of peripheral lung obstruction measured by forced oscillation techniques and its association to symptoms and quality of life.

Results (Published / Ongoing preliminary analyses)
In the first published paper, we could exhibit a cognitive dysfunction and impaired quality of life during pollen season in children with seasonal allergic rhinitis by using cognitive tests in addition to the standard method of validated self-reported questionnaires. In the second published paper, a more detailed aspect of QoL in patients suffering from severe asthma was investigated by in-depth interviews revealing situations that were not fully captured by standard questionnaires. Ongoing projects, regarding peripheral airways obstruction in relation to symptoms and quality of life have shown a preliminary association between the degree of self-reported QoL impairment and specific measurements using forced oscillation technique.

Conclusion
Patients suffering from allergies and obstructive airway diseases have an impaired Quality of Life, the degree of which needs to be further evaluated using additional methods other than the standard validated questionnaires. There is also a value of measuring peripheral airway obstruction since it might influence grade of symptoms.

Publications
ABSTRACT. HALF-TIME REVIEW
