

**QUALITY OF LIFE IN OBESE AND OVERWEIGHT CHILDREN AND ADOLESCENTS.**

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Background: Among children and adolescents the prevalence of obesity is about 20-25%. In obese adults obesity can affect the quality of life (QOL) by limiting mobility, physical endurance, and by social, academic, and job discrimination. The objective of our study was to determine the impact of obesity on QOL of children. Methods: The Pediatric Quality of Life Inventory (PedsQL<sup>®</sup>) is a modular instrument for measuring health-related QOL in children and adolescents aged 2-18 years. It is a multidimensional (Physical, Emotional, Social, School) child self-report and parent proxy-report scale consisting 23 items. The instructions ask how much of a problem each item has been during the past month. The PedsQL<sup>®</sup> were administered to 112 children and 112 parents recruited from pediatric obesity clinic and well care child clinic. Mean age was 11.3±4.0 years (range 2-17.5), female-to-male ratio 1.3:1. Ten children were overweight, 34 were obese and 68 were of normal weight as determined by body mass index (BMI) for age and gender. Results: Child Physical Health, Child Social and Emotional scores showed a significant negative correlation with BMI SDS ( $p<0.05$ ); there was no significant correlation with school scores. All four multidimensional parents' reports showed significant negative correlation with BMI SDS. There was good internal consistency reliability for all multidimensional scales scores between parents and children. Conclusions: Obese children report lower quality of life scores in the physical social, and emotional aspects. The more severe the obesity – the lower QOL.

