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QUALITY OF LIFE IN HEADACHE SUFFERING CHILDREN AND ADOLESCENTS: SELF-REPORT AND PARENT-REPORT

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Background The evaluation of Quality of Life (QOL) in children is different from adults, because it should take into account age-related characteristics. QOL instruments often do not consider the differences between parents and children in reporting the impact of headache on QOL.

Patients and methods 272 (158 F, 114 M) headache sufferers (9–15 years old; M=11.59; SD=± 2.03) and their parents (192 mothers; 34 fathers; 59 both parents; 3 care takers) had been enrolled. Both children and their parents filled in the symptomatologic questionnaire and the Impact scale of the Headache Specific Quality of Life of Children (HSQOL-C), in its validated form.

Results Factorial Anova showed that the agreement parents-children is significantly higher for 12–15 years old than for 9–11 years old [$F(1,255)=10.80$; $p=0.001$]. We found a higher level of congruence between child and parent reports for symptomatologic questionnaire (objective aspects) than Impact scale (subjective aspects). In the latter, headache sufferers obtained higher scores compared to their parents.

Conclusions Agreement parents-children increases proportionately with children's age. It is likely due to the child's cognitive improvement, mental and language skills. QOL instruments should taken into account age-related characteristics of child development.