

Comparing the EORTC QLQ-OES18, EORTC QLQ-OG25, and the FACT-E for assessing quality of life in patients with esophageal cancer: A systematic review

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INTRODUCTION

Three widely used quality-of-life (QoL) questionnaires for esophageal cancer:

- 1) The European Organisation for Research and Treatment of Cancer (EORTC) Quality of Life Questionnaire-Oesophageal 18 (QLQ-OES18),
 - 2) The EORTC Quality of Life Questionnaire-Oesophagogastric 25 (QLQ-OG25),
 - 3) The Functional Assessment of Cancer Therapy-Esophagus (FACT-E)¹
- This systematic review compares their **characteristics, psychometric properties, and validity**.

METHODS

- A comprehensive literature search was conducted from 1974 to December 16, 2024 in Medline, Embase, and Cochrane CENTRAL, supplemented by hand searches.
- Articles were included if they discussed the development, psychometric properties, validation, and/or international application of at least one of the mentioned QoL questionnaires. Only articles published in English were evaluated.
- Systematic reviews and meta-analyses were excluded. Articles were also excluded if they only used the three questionnaires to evaluate the QoL of patients with esophageal cancer without mentioning their psychometric properties or validity.
- The article screening and data extraction was performed by two independent reviewers (C.Y. and S.T.C.) and any conflicts were resolved by a third investigator (H.W. or S.F.L.).

RESULTS

- **Nineteen studies** met the inclusion criteria.
- All three instruments demonstrated **acceptable internal consistency** and were translated into **multiple languages**.²⁻¹⁸
- Translated versions of QLQ-OES18, QLQ-OG25, and FACT-E showed **satisfactory reliability**, though the original English version of QLQ-OES18 scored below acceptable (Cronbach's $\alpha < 0.70$) in 42% of scales.²⁻¹⁸
- All three instruments were **clinically validated** in patient groups with varying performance statuses, with OES-18 and FACT-E showing **responsiveness over time**.²⁻¹⁸
- However, the EORTC questionnaires were developed mainly in Europe and Australia (for OES-18), with only 6 patients from other countries. QLQ-OES18 was subsequently validated in other countries/regions, but a majority of studies had a sample size of < 100 patients. The FACT-E module, developed in Canada, has only been validated in South Korea and India. The QLQ-OG25 lacked validation in East Asian regions and provided no data for responsiveness.⁵⁻⁷

CONCLUSION

- The EORTC QLQ-OES18, QLQ-OG25, and the FACT-E are **reliable and valid** for assessing QoL in patients with esophageal cancer. ²⁻¹⁸
- Future research should validate these tools in diverse cultural settings to **enhance global applicability**.

REFERENCES

