

## **THE IMPACT OF EXACERBATIONS ON THE QUALITY OF LIFE IN PATIENTS WITH CHRONIC OBSTRUCTIVE PULMONARY DISEASE (COPD).**

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COPD exacerbations are one of the most important factors which influence the course of the disease and the quality of life in COPD patients. The aim of the study was to assess the exacerbation frequency in COPD patients in relation to the stage of COPD severity and to evaluate the impact of exacerbation on quality of life. Methods All patients received a diary in which they recorded exacerbations. The spirometry, SGRQ and dyspnea score were assessed at baseline, 12 and 24 months after enrollment. Material The study included 445 COPD patients in all stages of the disease ( GOLD 2010). After 24 months 261 diaries were returned. Results: The mean number of exacerbations in the respective stages of GOLD severity in the study period was as follows: 1:  $1.3 \pm 2.1$ ; 2:  $1.4 \pm 2.0$ ; 3:  $1.70 \pm 1.8$ ; 4:  $3.4 \pm 4.5$ . The statistical difference in the exacerbation frequency was observed between GOLD 4 and the remainder of the group. The following correlations were found between number of exacerbations and: GOLD 2: functional status; symptoms, health status total score in SGRQ; GOLD 3: activity, impact of the disease on the functional status, symptoms and health status total score and the mMRC score Conclusions: 1. The analysis of exacerbation frequency showed statistical significance only for the difference in the number of exacerbations between patients in COPD GOLD 4 and less severe stages of the disease. 2. We have shown significant correlations between the number of exacerbations and the quality of life in patients with moderate and severe COPD.