
Visual impairment is one of the most common clinical manifestations of Multiple Sclerosis (MS), and is strongly related to overall health-related quality of life (HRQOL) in MS and other disorders. However, the assessment of vision-specific HRQOL in patients with MS has been limited. The purpose of this study was to examine self-reported visual dysfunction in a clinically heterogeneous MS cohort using the 25-Item National Eye Institute Visual Function Questionnaire (VFQ-25). The VFQ-25 was administered by telephone interview to a subset of participants in a follow-up study to a phase III trial of interferon beta-1a for relapsing-remitting MS. Mean VFQ-25 composite scores and selected sub-scale scores were significantly lower (worse) among patients in our MS cohort (n=35) compared with a published reference group of patients with no history of chronic eye disease (n= 118). These differences were observed despite a relatively younger age and tighter distribution of binocular visual acuities in the MS cohort. Patients with MS in this study thus demonstrated a greater degree of self-reported visual dysfunction, as measured by the VFQ-25, compared with an eye disease-free reference group. The VFQ-25 is a potentially useful measure of vision-specific HRQOL in patients with MS.