

Q&A on SAFE-Q

Q: Is it necessary to include objective observations by physicians as an item in the questionnaire?

A: The Self-Administered Foot Evaluation Questionnaire (SAFE-Q) aims to understand evaluations by patients. Not all evaluations are possible with this questionnaire. Moreover, it is better to combine the use of the Japanese Society for Surgery of the Foot (JSSF) scale in evaluations by medical professionals.

Q: Is it compatible with the current Japanese Orthopaedic Association (JOA) score or JSSF scale?

A: Not compatible. While the current JOA score and JSSF scale are intended for evaluation by medical professionals, SAFEQ aims to be an evaluation carried out by patients.

Q: If elderly people cannot fill out the questionnaire correctly, can it be filled out by someone representing them?

A: Yes, if the situation is explained on the spot. However, the representatives must convey the details of the questions and answer choices correctly. They must not supplement questions and answers as much as possible as this will affect the answers. Questions and answers over the phone are not advisable.

Q: Can it be used for children?

A: Yes for those over 16 years old. It is not suitable for assessing the QOL to children aged 15 years or below.

Q: What kind of diseases can the questionnaire be used for?

A: SAFE-Q is a site-specific QOL assessment questionnaire for the foot and ankle. The disease is not relevant as long as it is in the foot and ankle joint area. It can also be used by healthy people.

Q: Score calculation for each subscale is complicated.

A: We have created an Excel file that automatically sums up the scores of each subscale, such as the mean, standard deviation, and standard error, and creates graphs of the mean and standard deviation when the score for each item is entered. The file can be downloaded from the JOA and JSSF websites. In the future, we plan to build a survey aggregation system using tablets.

Q: How do you handle missing values for each question item?

A: Even if there are missing values, calculations can be performed in the automatic input calculation system. However, please have patients decide one among options. For patients inputting their answers on tablets in the future, we are considering setting restrictions so that the questionnaire does not proceed to the next one if the current question has not been answered.

Source:

Hisateru Niki, Shinobu Tatsunami, Takafumi Aoki, Ryuzo Okuda, Yasunori Suda, Masato Takao, Yasuhito Tanaka. Committee report. Committee on Rating Standards for Foot Disease of the Japanese Society for Surgery of the Foot. Self-Administered Foot Evaluation Questionnaire (SAFE-Q). J Orthop Sci, 2013; 87(5):451-487.