



ELSEVIER

Correspondence and Communications

Upgrading the BREAST-Q questionnaire with donor site evaluation after PAP flap breast reconstruction

Dear Sir,

As recently published,¹ the BREAST-Q questionnaire² continues to represent a widespread patient-reported outcome and its subscales have undergone extensive psychometric evaluation, including examinations of clinical change.³ The reconstructive breast surgery range of questions fulfills a broad spectrum of pre- and post-operative scenarios. In our unit, we routinely give to our patients a pre-operative and a post-operative BREAST-Q questionnaire at 12 months follow up to evaluate patients' satisfaction and quality of life. However, we feel that, especially for the autologous reconstruction section, this seems to investigate only the dorsal and abdominal region,⁴ and there is a lack of available and analyzable scores with regards to other donor sites. In the last five years, the *profunda* artery perforator flap (PAP),⁵ has become a valuable option in breast reconstruction and we currently offer this as first line second choice autologous breast reconstruction in patients unsuitable for DIEP flaps.

Since June 2014, 43 PAP flaps have been performed in our unit, we found the BREAST-Q questions difficult to be applied for this type of patients and we feel there is a need for targeted questions with regards to PAP donor site. For this reason, we suggest to expand the breast reconstruction section of the pre- and post-operative BREAST-Q to other workhorse flaps (in particular PAP flap) in breast reconstruction in order to add an extra value to the validated and extensively used BREAST-Q improving its use for future analyses. We received some reported essays from patients at the end of their breast reconstruction journey with PAP flaps, therefore we highlighted some feedbacks that inspired us to generate some extra questions, similar to those directed to the abdominal region but for the inner thighs. In particular, a few sections of the pre-operative and post-operative questionnaire could be upgraded as explained in [Tables 1-2](#) in order to obtain a tailored post-operative quality of life assessment for this group of patients [[Tables 1-2](#)] and these new added items should ultimately undergo psychometric evaluation to gain an effective scientific validation.

Conflict of interest

None of the authors have funding or conflicts of interest to declare.

Table 1 Questions enhancing autologous BREAST-Q pre-operative reconstruction questionnaire in case of PAP flaps breast reconstruction.

In the past week, with your thighs in mind, how often have you experienced:

Question	Answer					
a. Difficulty sitting up because of thighs muscle weakness (e.g. getting out of bed)?	1	3	2	4	5	1 None of the time
b. Difficulty doing everyday activities because of thighs muscle weakness (e.g. making your bed)?	1	3	2	4	5	2 A little of the time
c. Thighs discomfort?	1	3	2	4	5	3 Some of the time
d. Thighs bloating?	1	3	2	4	5	4 Most of the time 5 All of the time

In the past week, how satisfied or dissatisfied have you been with:

Question	Answer				
a. How your thighs look when unclothed?	1	3	2	4	1 Very dissatisfied 2 Somewhat dissatisfied 3 Somewhat satisfied 4 Very satisfied

Table 2 Questions enhancing autologous BREAST-Q post-operative reconstruction questionnaire in case of PAP flap breast reconstruction.

BREAST-QTM – reconstruction module (postoperative) version 2.0 physical well-being: thighs					
	None of the time	A little of the time	Some of the time	Most of the time	All of the time
a. Difficulty sitting up because of thighs muscle weakness (e.g. getting out of bed)?	1	2	3	4	5
b. Difficulty doing everyday activities because of thighs muscle weakness (e.g. making your bed)?	1	2	3	4	5
c. Thighs discomfort?	1	2	3	4	5
d. Thighs bloating?	1	2	3	4	5
e. Thighs bulging?	1	2	3	4	5
f. Tightness in your thighs?	1	2	3	4	5
g. Pulling in your thighs?	1	2	3	4	5
BREAST-QTM – reconstruction module (postoperative) version 2.0 satisfaction with thighs					
	Dissatisfied	Somewhat dissatisfied	Somewhat satisfied	Very satisfied	
a. How your thighs look when unclothed?	1	2	3	4	
b. The position of your gluteal crease (butt crease)?	1	2	3	4	
c. How your thighs scars look?	1	2	3	4	

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