

# Temperament and character traits associated with health-related quality of life in cancer patients

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## ABSTRACT

**Background.** There is an increase in the attention to factors influencing the quality of life of cancer patients. The aim of the present study was to evaluate temperament and character traits related to health-related quality of life (HRQoL) in patients with cancer.

**Methods.** Two hundred and three inpatients from three Italian oncology departments filled in the Temperament Character Inventory (TCI-140) based on Cloninger's personality model, the SF-36 questionnaire assessing HRQoL, and the Hospital Anxiety and Depression Scale (HADS). Eighty percent of patients were undergoing chemotherapy.

**Results.** Lower levels of harm avoidance and higher levels of self-directedness were significantly correlated with a better HRQoL. Regression analysis controlling for psychopathology (anxiety and depression symptoms) showed that the influence of temperament and character traits on quality of life seemed to add little to the influence of psychopathology.

**Conclusions.** The present study demonstrates the existence of some relations between HRQoL and temperament and character traits assessed using the TCI-140 questionnaire. However, among the psychological factors, psychopathology seems to retain more influence on HRQoL of cancer patients.

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## ABBREVIATIONS

QoL: quality of life  
HRQoL: health-related quality of life

## TCI: Temperament Character Inventory

C: cooperativeness  
HA: harm avoidance  
NS: novelty seeking  
P: persistence  
RD: reward dependence  
SD: self-directedness  
ST: self-transcendence

## SF-36: Medical Outcome Study Short Form 36

BP: bodily pain  
GH: general health  
MH: mental health  
PF: physical functioning  
RE: role limitation – emotional  
RP: role limitation – physical  
SF: social functioning  
VT: vitality

## HADS: Hospital Anxiety and Depression Scale

A: anxiety  
D: depression

## EPQ: Eysenck Personality Questionnaire

**Key words:** cancer, oncology, temperament, character, quality of life.

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