

English Summary GLA:D Annual Report 2013

Background

National and international clinical guidelines for osteoarthritis suggest a combined approach consisting of patient education, exercise and weight management, if needed. However, this approach is insufficiently implemented in clinical care. Good Life with Arthritis in Denmark (GLA:D) is an initiative from the Research Unit for Musculoskeletal Function and Physiotherapy at University of Southern Denmark with the overarching aim to implement current clinical guidelines for osteoarthritis into clinical care.

GLA:D consists of three parts

- Education of physical therapists in delivering care in accordance with clinical guidelines
- Patient education and neuromuscular exercise for patients with OA-like symptoms primarily from the hip or knee
- The national GLA:D-registry for data collection and evaluation of results

GLA:D aims

- Access to care according to clinical guidelines across health care sectors and geographic regions
- Pain reduction
- Reduced intake of pain killers
- Improved physical function and physical activity
- Improved quality of life
- Reduced number of visits and health care cost for the individual and the society

Brief summary of results 2013: How many and what patients are part of the GLA:D-registry, and what are the treatment results?

- The first patient was entered into the GLA:D registry on January 29, 2013. This annual report presents the data for the patients where data was available on December 31, 2013. **719 patients** (73% women, mean age 63.5 years, 74% assign the knee as the most problematic joint) have been treated at any of the **49 GLA:D-treatment units** spread across Denmark, and **310 patients** have attended the 3 month follow-up
- 13% report being on sick-leave during the last year because of their hip/knee
- Mean symptom duration is 4.1 years for those with hip osteoarthritis and 6.2 years for those with knee osteoarthritis
- 62% report having symptoms also from the other hip or knee joint

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- 33% have symptoms also from their hands
- Mean BMI for hip patients is 26.9 and for knee patients 28.7
- 83% of patients report at least daily pain at first assessment
- Pain intensity:
 - Before GLA:D, the pain intensity is 51 (on a 0-100 mm visual analog scale) for hip patients and 49 for knee patients
 - After GLA:D, the pain intensity decreased with 11.4 mm (22% reduction) for hip patients and with 16.7 mm (34% reduction) for knee patients (at 3 months)
- Usage of pain killers:
 - Before GLA:D, 64% take pain killers because of their hip/knee pain
 - After GLA:D, 23% fewer patients take pain killers because of their hip/knee (at 3 months)
- 86% of the hip osteoarthritis patients and 82% of the knee osteoarthritis patients report difficulties with walking at first assessment
- Gait speed was improved by 11% for hip patients and 7% for knee patients. This improvement corresponds to using close to 2 seconds less time when crossing a 20 m wide street
- 98% use the acquired knowledge at least weekly, most of them daily, and 98% are very satisfied of satisfied with the GLA:D treatment package.

Perspectives

Patients included in the GLA:D-registry are on average 4-5 years younger than those having first time hip or knee replacement surgery. The proportion of women in the GLA:D-registry is somewhat higher (73%) compared to the close to 60% proportion women having joint replacement surgery. Most patients in the GLA:D-registry have been symptomatic for many years, experience symptoms also from other joints, are overweight and have waking difficulties. It would be desirable for patients to undergo the GLA:D treatment package earlier during the disease course, and supplemented with weight reduction (if needed).

Because of the limited number of patients having had their 3 months follow-up visit (310), and no one having had their one year follow-up yet, it is too early to conclude on results from undergoing GLA:D. However, it looks promising since those having had the GLA:D treatment package, consisting of education and neuromuscular exercise, report less pain, reduced consumption of pain killers, improved gait speed and being satisfied with the GLA:D-treatment package.

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