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# Translating overactive bladder questionnaires in 14 languages

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## Abstract

### Objectives

Overactive bladder (OAB) affects millions of people worldwide. Identifying patients and measuring OAB's impact on symptom severity and patients' health-related quality-of-life is necessary to ensure proper treatment and facilitate communication among patients, clinicians, and caregivers. To accomplish this, the Overactive Bladder questionnaire (OAB-q) and its subsets instruments, the OAB-q Short-Form and the OAB-V8, were developed in U.S. English. To measure the impact of OAB cross-culturally, we performed the linguistic validation of these instruments in Danish, English (Canada), French (Canada and France), Italian (Switzerland), German (Switzerland), Korean, Norwegian, Polish, Portuguese (Brazil), Romanian, Swedish, and Turkish. The linguistic validation was conducted following a rigorous method to ensure conceptual equivalence between the original and its translations.

## Methods

In each country, a specialist monitored the process, which included six steps: (1) two forward translations; (2) comparison and reconciliation of the translations; (3) back-translation; (4) comparison of the source and back-translation; (5) review by one urologist or gynecologist; and (6) a comprehension test using patients.

## Results

The translation of symptom-related adjectives such as "uncomfortable," "sudden," "accidental," "uncontrollable" proved challenging. The subtle differences in the meaning of symptomatic items increased the difficulties to find equivalents. Issues regarding the appropriateness of certain concepts and idiomatic terms emerged during cognitive debriefing. The terms "urge," "desire," "urination," "commute," "drowsy," and "escape routes" were not retained literally and were replaced by colloquial expressions.

## Conclusions

The 14 versions of the OAB-q, OAB-q Short-Form, and OAB-V8 were successfully validated linguistically to facilitate data collection cross-culturally and the international comparison of symptom bother and health-related quality of life in patients with OAB.



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