PURPOSE: To prospectively assess quality of life (QoL) in patients receiving conformal radiation therapy (CRT) for prostate cancer. PATIENTS AND METHODS: 78 men with definitive CRT for prostate cancer were entered into the study. Patients were assessed before CRT, at 40 and 60 Gy, and 2, 12 and 24 months after the end of treatment. QoL was assessed using the EORTC Quality of Life Questionnaire C30 and the prostate module PR25. Changes in mean QoL scores with time of ≥ 10 points were considered clinically relevant. RESULTS: Global QoL did not change statistically significant during CRT and was slightly above baseline levels during follow-up. CRT had a statistically significant negative short-term impact on role functioning, fatigue, and PR25 urinary symptoms. The scores recovered within 2 months to 1 year after CRT. Emotional functioning and social functioning scores slightly increased during and after CRT. Role functioning decreased by > 10 points at 60 Gy and urinary symptoms decreased by > 10 points at 40 and 60 Gy. All other differences were < 10 points. A high number of concomitant diseases and having no children were negative pretreatment predictors for long-term global QoL. CONCLUSION: Definitive CRT for prostate cancer does not compromise global QoL during therapy and up to 2 years after treatment. It has a limited negative effect on role functioning,
urinary symptoms and, to a lesser extent, on fatigue with restitution within 2 months to 1 year after
treatment.