

PREVALENCE OF OVERACTIVE BLADDER SYNDROME, STRESS URINARY INCONTINENCE AND ASSOCIATED BOTHER IN WOMEN AGED 40 AND ABOVE – A BELGIAN EPIDEMIOLOGICAL SURVEY

Hypothesis / aims of study

The overactive bladder (OAB) syndrome, with urgency as fundamental symptom, with or without urge incontinence, and usually with frequency and nocturia, can present in various severities and degrees of bother, determining the need for treatment. Patients often postpone seeking help and are not routinely screened. This may contribute to depreciated or wide variations in prevalence estimates of this condition [1]. To assess the extent of the OAB syndrome, stress urinary incontinence (SUI) and associated bother in the female population in Belgium, an epidemiological survey was performed in the primary care setting.

Study design, materials and methods

Data on the OAB syndrome and SUI were prospectively collected among women ≥ 40 years by general practitioners during a regular visit for any reason within the period February - May 2011. The validated Bladder Control Self-Assessment Questionnaire (B SAQ) [2] was used and complemented with a question about presence of SUI and the question "how much does your bladder bother you during everyday life". The primary outcome variable was the presence of OAB symptoms, defined as a total symptom score of at least 4 or a total bother score of at least 1 on the B SAQ. Secondary variables included the total/item scores for individual symptoms and bother, symptom and bother class, presence of urgency and outcome of the additional questions.

Results

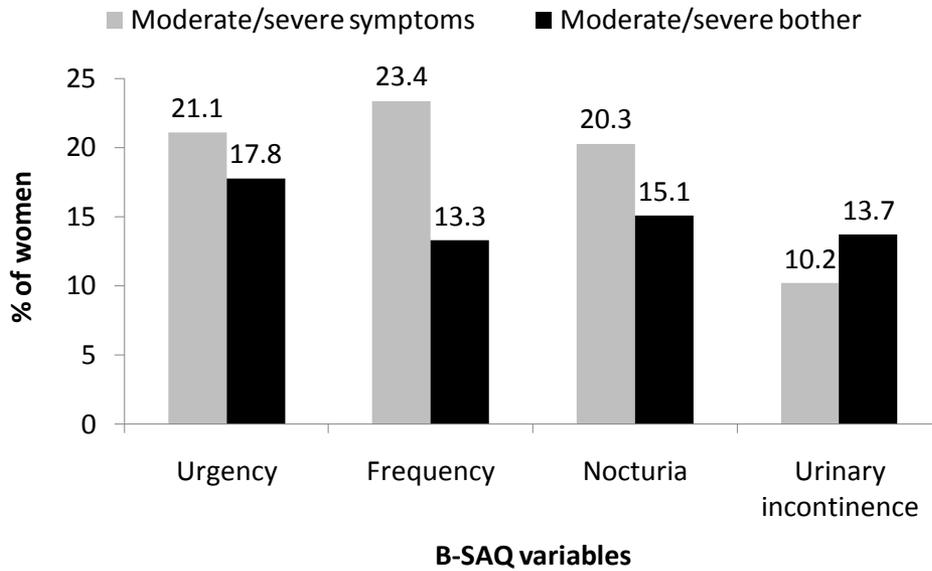
Data from 7,193 women with a mean age of 61.0 years (SD 12.6 years) were analysed. 33.9% had OAB symptoms (as predefined above). Most observed women reported overall mild OAB symptoms (46.9%) and 34.9% had moderate to (very) significant symptoms. A total of 64% of women indicated that they were bothered to some extent by their OAB symptoms. 52.3% of the women reported any urgency. Moderate to severe urgency, frequency or nocturia were present at higher rates than moderate to severe urinary incontinence (Figure). Urgency and nocturia were reported to be the most bothersome symptoms (Figure). Moderate to severe SUI affected 17.7% of women. A total of 16.4% of women reported to be moderately to severely bothered by their bladder in everyday life. The prevalence and bother of the OAB syndrome increased with increasing age.

Interpretation of results

In a group of women ≥ 40 years attending a primary care physician for any reason, more than 1 in 3 suffer from symptoms associated with the OAB syndrome. Albeit symptoms were considered of largely mild severity, the bladder caused moderate to large bother in about 1 in 6 women.

Concluding message

The high prevalence rate of the OAB syndrome and SUI in women ≥ 40 years visiting a primary care physician for any reason warrants awareness for early diagnosis. Early identification of women with clinically significant symptoms and/or bother, who require treatment, is mandatory.



References

1. Irwin DE, et al. Worldwide prevalence estimates of lower urinary tract symptoms, overactive bladder, urinary incontinence and bladder outlet obstruction. *BJU Int.* 108:1132-8 (2011)
2. Basra R, et al. Design and validation of a new screening instrument for lower urinary tract dysfunction: the Bladder control Self-Assessment Questionnaire (B-SAQ). *Eur Urol.* 52:230-238 (2007)

Disclosures

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