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Title: URGENCY, URGE INCONTINENCE AND VOIDING SYMPTOMS IN MEN AND WOMEN AGED 70 AND OVER

Aims of the Study:

Urgency and urge incontinence are common and bothersome symptoms among older people, both men and women. Voiding symptoms are known to be common especially in older men while less is known about voiding symptoms in older women. Quite recently, however, older women have reported symptoms similar to those mentioned by men when answering questionnaires designed to evaluate lower urinary tract symptoms in men with benign prostatic enlargement (BPE) (1,2). The aim of the study was to evaluate the prevalence of urgency, urge incontinence and voiding symptoms and their associations in older men and women.

Methods:

A population-based cross-sectional survey involving 171 men and 227 women aged 70 and over. The survey was conducted in 2000 and the data were collected by interview. The response rate was 92.8 %. Age and gender specific weighting was used to generalize the figures to the basic population of that area at the time of the survey. Urgency was defined as having difficulty to get into the lavatory in time but no urine loss. Urge incontinence was defined as loss of urine associated with a sudden urge to urinate. Voiding symptoms were defined as weakened and /or intermittent stream. Prevalences of urgency, urge incontinence and voiding symptoms were calculated for men and women aged 70-79 years and 80 years and over. Logistic regression models were used to examine the association of voiding symptoms with urgency with or without incontinence adjusted in the separate models of the two genders for age and in the combined model additionally for gender.

Results:

The prevalence of urge incontinence was higher than urgency alone in both men and women (23.9% vs. 9.8% and 36.4% vs. 8.6 %, respectively). 71 % of the men and 48.3 % of the women reported voiding symptoms ($p < 0.001$). Both men and women with voiding symptoms were significantly more likely to report urgency with or without incontinence than people without voiding symptoms (OR:s 3.49 (95% CI 1.42-8.57) and 2.34(95 % CI 1.31-4.17), respectively). Age in the female group (OR 1.08(95% CI 1.03-1.14))and female gender in the combined model (OR 1.98(95 % CI 1.25-3.16)) increased the risk of urgency with or without incontinence.

Conclusions:

Urgency, urge incontinence and voiding symptoms are common and associated with each other both in older men and women. The association is stronger in men. Women are at greater risk of urgency with or without incontinence and this risk is increased with advancing age. By reason of the nonspecificity of the symptoms and the cross-sectional nature of the study no direct conclusions as to causal relationship can be drawn from the results. However, the findings here emphasize the complexity of urinary symptoms in older people which should be considered when planning treatments for the increasing number of older patients suffering from urinary problems.

References:

- 1) Specificity of the American Urological Association voiding symptoms index: comparison of unselected and selected samples of both sexes. J Urol 1993;150:1710-
- 2) American Urological Association symptoms index for women with voiding symptoms: lack of index specificity for benign prostatic hyperplasia. J Urol 1993; 150:1706-

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