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Title: IS THERE ANY DIFFERENCE IN THE CLINICAL FINDINGS OF URETHRAL SYNDROME BETWEEN KOREA AND WESTERN COUNTRY?

Aims of Study:

In the United Kingdom, the prevalence of urethral syndrome in women aged 21-65 years is known as 22%(1) and The United states has at least five million medical consultations for this every year(1). But, in Korea, there has been few data on this entity, because of the relative lack of priority of this entity compared with other problems, the different evaluation of investigators and so forth. The clinical findings of this functional, non-life threatening disease such like urethral syndrome depends largely on the racial difference and their usual folk foods. Most Koreans eat capsaicin abundant foods such as Kimchi, and this can make the difference in the characteristics and progressions of diseases. The aim of this study was to evaluate the epidemiologic data of female urethral syndrome in Korea and search for the difference to the western women.

Methods:

Of the 1255 patients who have complained of frequency, urgency, and lower abdominal discomfort(LAD) in our Clinics from March 2000 to February 2001, we included 331 female patients (20-87 years, average 48.8) who were satisfying the NIH Criteria except the cystoscopic findings. These women with longstanding unremitting urinary symptoms(3-320 months, average 32.3) for which no infective cause had been identified by standard bacteriologic techniques were eligible for inclusion. These were patients who would normally be considered for cystoscopy as part of their diagnostic evaluation.

Results:

126 (38%) patients had the past history of frequent urinary tract infections. Two most common symptoms except the frequency, urgency, and LAD were the nocturia(57.1%) and residual urine sense(48.3%). 65 (19.8%) patients had history of urinary incontinence, of whom 14 (21%) patients showed the stress type. The cystoscopy was done in 112 (34.1%) patients. The most common findings were the squamous metaplasia on 86 (77%) patients, and the anterior vaginal wall tenderness and ipsilateral trigger point on 76 (68%) patients. We could diagnosis the interstitial cystitis in only 14 (12%) patients by cystoscopy. The urodynamic study was done in 153 (46.5%) patients.

Conclusion:

The clinical findings of female urethral syndrome in Korea showed some different characteristics comparing to those of the western country (2). Especially, the prevalence of interstitial cystitis in Korea showed much less than that of western country. This might be related to their usual taking foods which is abundant in capsaicin.

References:

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