

## HOW RELIABLE IS A SELF ADMINISTERED QUESTIONNAIRE IN DETECTING SEXUAL ABUSE: A RETROSPECTIVE STUDY IN PATIENTS WITH PELVIC FLOOR COMPLAINTS

### Hypothesis / aims of study

Sexual abuse and sexual functioning are topics that health professionals find difficult to discuss. Women who present with pelvic floor complaints often experience sexual difficulties and, therefore, questions regarding sexual function should be a routine part of screening. Furthermore, pelvic floor complaints are correlated with sexual abuse and asking about abuse should be a routine part of screening as well. Considering the fact that many practitioners have difficulty enquiring about abuse, we have suggested that a questionnaire may be helpful in improving the recognition and management of patients who have a history of sexual abuse.

The aim of the study was to evaluate the efficiency of detecting sexual abuse by a self-administered questionnaire

### Study design, materials and methods

Report of sexual abuse in a self-administered pelvic floor questionnaire before visiting our outpatient pelvic floor department was evaluated during the validation of a new administered questionnaire the Pelvic Floor Inventories (PelFIs) administered by a pelvic floor clinician in a later stage.

### Results

Sexual abuse was reported in 20 patients with pelvic floor dysfunction during administration of the PelFIs and were also evaluated on our Pelvic Floor Department. Only 6 of them (30%) did not note in the self-administered questionnaire they had a history of sexual abuse.

### Interpretation of results

A self-administered questionnaire for pelvic floor complaints is reliable in detecting sexual abuse and can be helpful in daily practice

### Concluding message

In our opinion the interaction of a patient and clinician during the administration of a questionnaire is essential in order to gain the patients' trust and thus acquire a true perspective of past or prevalent sexual abuse and FSDs. We believe that a questionnaire administered by a clinician should be preferred to a self-administered questionnaire. However, in order to recognize sexual abuse a self-administered questionnaire can still be helpful and thus may offer healthcare physicians a helping hand in dealing with sexual abuse of their female patients in daily practice.

### References

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