

## FEMALE SEXUAL FUNCTION BEFORE AND AFTER SPARC-SLING PROCEDURE

### Hypothesis/aims of study

Patients with stress urinary incontinence (SUI) often complain about sexual dysfunction. The SPARC sling operation is in general an effective and safe procedure, albeit its effect on sexual function is unclear. Aim of this institutional review board approved study was to evaluate the quality of female sexual function before and after SPARC-sling placement.

### Study design, materials and methods

This study was approved by the Ethics Committee of the Medical University Graz. Between June 2001 and March 2009 a total of 151 women (mean age 60±11.90 yrs.) with SUI underwent SPARC sling placement at our institution. Of these, 83 women completed the validated female sexual function index questionnaire (FSFI) at baseline and at date last seen. A minimum follow up of 12 months was required for study inclusion.

27/83 (32.5%) women (mean age 59.9±10.06 yrs.) who had the same conditions concerning relationship and personal circumstances pre- and postoperatively, were eligible for analyses. Women, who were not sexually active before and/or after SPARC-sling procedure due to various reasons were excluded from analyses. Statistical analyses consisted of the Wilcoxon rank-sum test, a p value < 0.05 was considered statistically significant.

### Results

Mean follow-up was 4.71±2.42 years. 10 (37%) women were premenopausal, whereas 17 (63%) were postmenopausal. 20 (74%) women were married, 5 (19%) divorced, 1 (4%) woman unmarried and 1 (4%) widowed. 5 (19%) women used antidepressants, 6 (22%) hormone replacement therapy and 2 (7.4%) suffered from diabetes mellitus. Mean total FSFI score was 25.32±6.05 at baseline and improved significantly to 26.61±7.14 at date last seen (p=0.01). The mean scores of the FSFI domains increased from baseline to date last seen for desire (questions 1+2) from 3.44 to 3.67 (p=0.04), for arousal (questions 3-6) from 3.89 to 4.11 (p=0.08), for lubrication (questions 7-10) from 4.54 to 4.57 (p=0.99), for orgasm (questions 11-13) from 4.04 to 4.37 (p=0.33), for satisfaction (questions 14-16) from 4.49 to 4.67 (p=0.005) and pain (questions 17-19) from 4.92 to 5.14 (p=0.08). Only the domains for desire (p=0.04), as well as for satisfaction (p=0.005) improved in a statistically significant fashion from baseline to date last seen, while the others did not.

### Interpretation of results

Female sexual function in patients with SUI improved significantly after SPARC-sling procedure, regarding the total score of FSFI and both domains, namely desire and satisfaction, whereby the domain of satisfaction could be regarded as reflection of patient's quality-of-life.

### Concluding message

Moreover in this study, SPARC sling placement did not worsen female sexual function.

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|-----------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Specify source of funding or grant</b>                             | None                                            |
| <b>Is this a clinical trial?</b>                                      | Yes                                             |
| <b>Is this study registered in a public clinical trials registry?</b> | No                                              |
| <b>Is this a Randomised Controlled Trial (RCT)?</b>                   | No                                              |
| <b>What were the subjects in the study?</b>                           | HUMAN                                           |
| <b>Was this study approved by an ethics committee?</b>                | Yes                                             |
| <b>Specify Name of Ethics Committee</b>                               | Ethics Committee of the Medical University Graz |
| <b>Was the Declaration of Helsinki followed?</b>                      | Yes                                             |
| <b>Was informed consent obtained from the patients?</b>               | Yes                                             |