Is Barthel Index a Relevant Measure for Measuring Prevalence of Urinary Incontinence in Stroke Patients?

Hypothesis / Aims of Study
To compare the prevalence of urinary incontinence (UI) measured by Barthel Index and the Danish Prostate Symptom Score (DAN-PSS-1) questionnaire in stroke patients.

Study design, materials and methods
A cross-sectional, hospital based survey was initiated whereby 407 stroke patients, average age 67 (SD 12) years with a mean interval of 101 days since onset of last stroke at inclusion. The stroke patients self-reported the prevalence of UI by Barthel Index and the DAN-PSS-1 questionnaire.

Results
The prevalence of UI was 10.5% measured by the Barthel Index and 49% by the DAN-PSS-1 questionnaire. Furthermore, the DAN-PSS-1 questionnaire distinguished between types of UI (38% urge UI, 28% stress UI and 14% other UI).

There were significantly fewer stroke patients who reported UI by the Barthel Index compared to the DAN-PSS questionnaire in term of urge UI (p < 0.001), stress UI (p < 0.001) and other UI (p < 0.001)

Interpretation of results
The results showed that DAN-PSS-1 questionnaire contains more specific UI information compared to the Barthel Index. Fewer stroke patients reported UI by the Barthel Index compared to the DAN-PSS-1 questionnaire and moreover the DAN-PSS-1 questionnaire enables identification of different UI-types.

Concluding message
The Barthel Index is not sensitive to the UI prevalence; instead the authors suggest using a more specific instrument such as the DAN-PSS-1 questionnaire.

Specify source of funding or grant
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Is this a clinical trial?
No

What were the subjects in the study?
HUMAN

Was this study approved by an ethics committee?
Yes

Specify Name of Ethics Committee
The Ethical Committee for the Copenhagen County

Was the Declaration of Helsinki followed?
Yes

Was informed consent obtained from the patients?
Yes