

DO FUNCTIONAL BOWEL SYMPTOMS AFFECT SEXUAL FUNCTION IN AN ADULT FEMALE COHORT

Hypothesis / aims of study

Identify relationships between FGI symptoms, idiopathic nausea, functional bloating, and unspecified belching, with sexual dysfunction.

Study design, materials and methods

A convenience sample of female patients presenting to a single tertiary healthcare center for Hydrogen Breath Testing (HBT), a common diagnostic study for patients with FGI symptoms, were recruited. Subjects completed an anonymous electronic survey through the Qualtrics Survey Software system. The survey included basic demographics along with a battery of validated questionnaires associated with FGI symptoms, anxiety, depression, self-esteem, and sexual function and sexuality. Sexual dysfunction was defined as a total score less than 26 on the Female Sexual Function Index (FSFI).; additionally, the FSFI is subdivided into six sexual domains, desire, arousal, lubrication, orgasm, satisfaction, and pain, where a lower score equates to dysfunction. Analysis included a multiple linear regression analysis, non-parametric Mann Whitney U-Test, and a Pearson chi-square test. A p-value ≤ 0.05 was considered to be significant.

Results

119 adult females were included in the analysis: 86% Caucasian, mean age = 47.7 years, and mean BMI = 27.8 kg/m². Using the Rome III criteria system: 73.1% presented with functional bloating, 33.8% idiopathic nausea, and 37.8% unspecified belching. The multiple linear regression models depicted weak correlations and no predictive variables for overall sexual dysfunction and within the individual domains. The distribution of FSFI subdomains among the FGI symptom groups are presented in Table 1. The likelihood for sexual dysfunction was similar among all three FGI symptom groups meeting the Rome III criteria compared to their counterparts: Functional Bloating, 55.6% vs. 67.8% (p=0.230), Idiopathic Nausea, 64% vs 60% (p=0.742), and Unspecified Belching, 62% vs 63% (p=0.910).

TABLE 1 Distribution among Functional GI Symptom Groups in Relation to FSFI Subdomains (p values)

FSFI	FUNCTIONAL BLOATING (p-value)	IDIOPATHIC NAUSEA (p-value)	UNSPECIFIED BELCHING (p-value)
DESIRE	0.245	0.445	0.220
AROUSAL	0.828	0.515	0.776
LUBRICATION	0.857	0.463	0.854
ORGASM	0.967	0.780	0.376
SATISFACTION	0.811	0.085	0.956
PAIN	0.422	0.875	0.626
TOTAL	0.532	0.475	0.904

Interpretation of results

FGI symptoms, bloating, nausea, and belching, have limited effect predicting overall sexual dysfunction.

Concluding message

Further studies are warranted to investigate how FGI symptoms, in combination with psychological predictors, alter sexual function. Data is limited since a control group, no FGI symptoms, was absent.

Disclosures

Funding: This project is not supported by any grants or other sources of funding **Clinical Trial:** No **Subjects:** HUMAN **Ethics Committee:** University of Michigan's Internal Review Board **Helsinki:** Yes **Informed Consent:** Yes