

IPSS NORMATIVE VALUES FOR HEALTHY OLDER ADULTS LIVING IN THE UK

Hypothesis / aims of study

Screening for Lower Urinary Tract Symptoms (LUTS) could raise awareness and increase knowledge among healthy older adults through prompting conversations about bladder health, treatment seeking and self-management approaches. This has the potential to improve symptoms and associated health related quality of life (QOL). The International Prostate Symptom Score (IPSS) questionnaire (1) is a brief (8-item), self-report screening measure of LUTS (7-items) and associated QOL (1-item), which has been found to be valid and reliable with both males and females. Cut-off IPSS scores are used to interpret the severity of LUTS by categorising scores into: mild (1-7), moderate (8-19) or severe (20-35) symptoms. An alternative approach however is to regard LUTS as a dimensional rather than a categorical construct by considering an overall score in relation to normative values produced from a comparative general population. The aim of the current study was to provide IPSS normative data for older community living adults in the UK.

Study design, materials and methods

The current study used data from a large survey undertaken in the UK (2), which included the 7 IPSS LUTS questions. IPSS norms were produced and presented as means, standard deviations, medians, ranges and 25th and 75th percentile scores, broken down by age (60-64 years, 65-69 years, 70-74 years, 75-79 years, and 80 years and over) and gender.

Results

Data from a total of 1103 survey respondents including 503 men and 579 women aged between 60 and 99 years and living in the UK, were used for the analyses. Males tended to report higher IPSS scores than females for all age groups. Median total IPSS scores for both males and females increased with age from 5 to 8 and from scores of 4 to 6, respectively. Median scores and 25th to 75th percentile scores indicate that normal ranges do not fall into a severe category of LUTS, irrespective of age or gender.

Table 1: IPSS Scores According to Age and Gender

		60-64 years	65-69 years	70-74 years	75-79 years	≥80 years	Total
Males	M (SD)	7.12 (6.73)	7.30 (7.12)	7.86 (6.55)	8.71 (7.30)	9.12 (7.0)	7.75 (6.91)
	Md	5.00	5.00	7.00	6.00	8.00	6.00
	Range (Min-max)	33 (0-33)	33 (0-33)	28 (0-28)	26 (0-26)	35 (0-35)	35 (0-35)
	Females	M (SD)	5.37 (5.39)	6.81 (7.15)	8.36 (6.60)	7.20 (6.60)	7.56 (6.55)
	Md	4.00	5.00	6.00	5.00	6.00	5.00
	Range (Min-max)	27 (0-27)	31 (0-31)	30 (0-30)	27 (0-27)	26 (0-26)	31 (0-31)

M = mean; SD = Standard Deviation; Md = Median; Min-max = minimum IPSS score to maximum IPSS score.

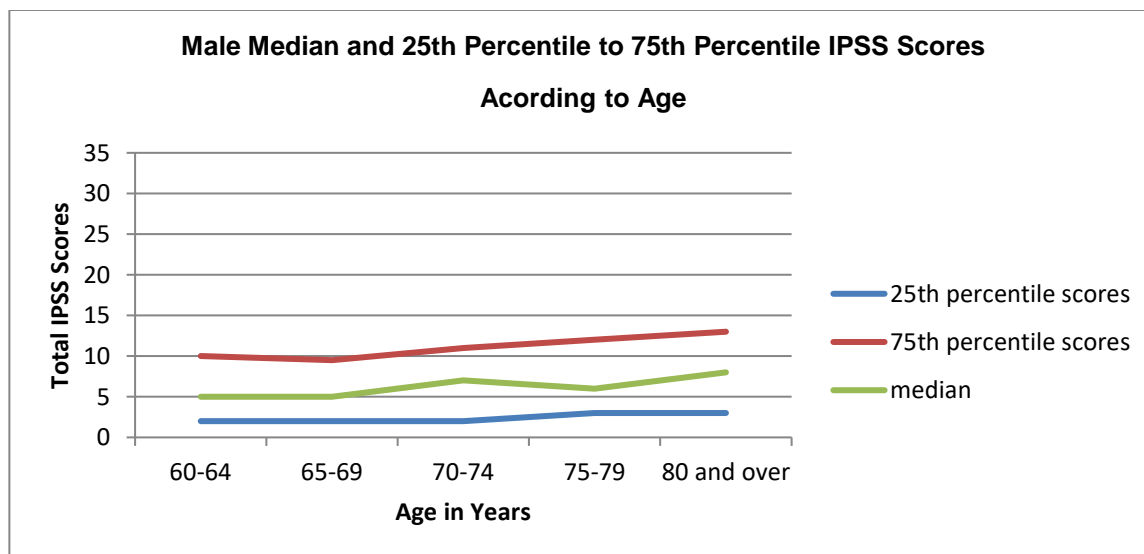


Figure 1

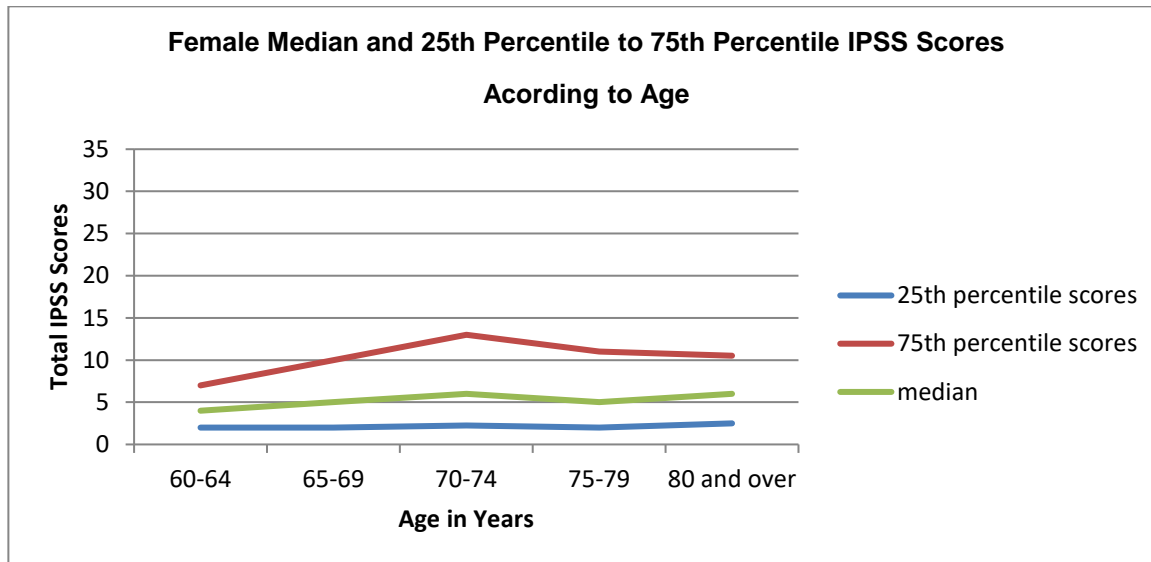


Figure 2

Interpretation of results

This study provides the first IPSS normative values for a representative sample of healthy community living older adults in the UK. These norms will be useful for researchers and practitioners as individual IPSS scores can be used for comparison with peers of similar age and gender, making the scores more meaningful to the individual. Presenting the normative values could help to combat the perception that poor bladder health is an inevitable part of ageing, as all norms in the current study fall into either mild or low moderate symptom categories. It would be useful to investigate how the norms that we have produced, compare with norms for older adults in other countries, to determine whether there are cultural differences that could play an important part in the prevalence of LUTS.

Concluding message

Normative IPSS data in healthy older adults provide evidence of mild LUTS for both men and women, increasing with age. Such normative values can be used to facilitate interpretation of IPSS results and allow for judgements to be made, or to raise awareness, about an older person's bladder health at a particular point in time.

References

1. Gray, M. 1998, "Psychometric evaluation of the international prostate symptom score", Urologic Nursing, vol. 18, no. 3, pp. 175-83.
2. Booth J, O'Neil K, Lawrence M, McMillan L, Munro A, Godwin J, McLaren W. Advancing community nursing practice: Detecting and managing nocturia in community-living older people. Final Report, Queens Nursing Institute Scotland, July 2008.

Disclosures

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