

A QUALITATIVE INTERVIEW STUDY TO EXPLORE THE BURDEN OF NOCTURIA ON PATIENTS' QUALITY OF LIFE

Hypothesis / aims of study

Nocturia, waking to urinate during the night, is associated with significant patient burden due to impaired sleep quality and quantity (1,2). This is the first study to explore the disruptions associated with nocturia specifically in relation to patient's roles and responsibilities.

Study design, materials and methods

A semi-structured qualitative interview guide was developed to explore potential areas of concern to patients with nocturia. Patients with a clinician confirmed diagnosis of nocturia participated in a face-to-face interview with an experienced interviewer. Open-ended questions with follow up probes were used to understand the nature of nighttime disruption to patients and associated consequences for daily living. Interviews were recorded, transcribed verbatim, and analyzed using ATLAS.ti qualitative analysis software. Thematic analysis methods were utilized; iterative descriptive coding was applied to identify key themes in the data. Themes were also compared between sub-groups of patients with work or caregiver role responsibilities versus those without such duties (e.g. retired, non-caregiver).

Results

Interviews were completed with 20 patients (n=10 male, n=10 female), aged between 39-80 (mean=64). Patients had been diagnosed on average for 26 months (range 7-69 months). Patients experienced an average of 3 nightly voids. Key themes emerged from the data; patients described the relationship between voiding frequency and impaired sleep quality and quantity. Patients also described substantial daytime burden on their physical functioning (e.g. tiredness, lack of energy), cognitive function (e.g. lack of concentration), social functioning (e.g. avoidance of sleeping away from home), and emotional wellbeing (e.g. feeling irritable). These difficulties limited patients' ability to work effectively, perform daily activities, and fulfill role responsibilities e.g. caring for children/grandchildren. Lifestyle and role were significant moderating factors; patients in fulltime employment or with carer roles reported greater impairment; those without were better able to employ coping behaviors such as napping during the daytime, to lessen the burden they experienced.

Interpretation of results

In this study, the burden of nocturia was not limited to nighttime disruption; overall functioning and daily activities were also impaired for most patients with particular difficulties for those working or in caregiver roles. In line with standards for qualitative research, theoretical saturation was explored and deemed to be met, indicating that a comprehensive understanding of daytime burden of nocturia was achieved. Analysts engaged in a reflexivity process to minimize researcher bias in interpretation.

Concluding message

Nocturia is a nighttime symptom with longer lasting consequences for patient functioning and wellbeing throughout the next day. Patients' lifestyle and role circumstances affect the type and extent of the burden experienced. Recognition of the consequences of nocturia may help to improve effective patient-centered care and self-management.

References

1. Ancoli-Israel S; Bliwise DL; Norgaard JP (2011) The effect of nocturia on sleep. *Sleep Med Rev*, 15(2), 91-97.
2. Tikkinen KA; Johnson TM 2nd; Tammela TL; Sintonen H; Haukka J; Huhtala H; et al. (2010) Nocturia frequency, bother, and quality of life: how often is too often? A population-based study in Finland. *European urology*, 57(3):488-96.

Disclosures

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