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Title (type in
CAPITAL
LETTERS)A LONGITUDINAL COHORT STUDY OF ELDERLY WOMEN WITH
URINARY TRACT INFECTIONS

Aims: The prevalence of urinary tract infections (UTI), urinary incontinence (UI), estrogen-use and overall mortality in a cohort of elderly women who had been treated for a UTI in 1985-6 was re-assessed 10 years later.

Material and methods: A random sample of 6000 women from the birth cohorts 1900, 1905, 1910, 1915 and 1920 was invited in 1986 to complete a questionnaire about UTI, UI and estrogen use (Response rate 70%, n = 4206). Treatment with antibiotics for a UTI during 1985-86 was reported by 688 women (17.1%). In 1995 a similar questionnaire was sent to the women from this group who were still alive (n = 434/688). Mortality in the women with a history of UTI was compared with an aged-matched control group of women.

Results: The questionnaire was completed and returned by 361 of the 434 women (83%). Treatment for at least one UTI during the last ten years was reported by 219 women (61%). The number of reported UTIs varied: 35% had 1-2 UTIs, 28% had 3-4 UTIs, 27% 5-10 UTIs and as many as 10% had had more than ten UTIs. In 1986, 30% of the women who reported a UTI were also suffering from UI and the prevalence of UI was higher ($p < 0.001$) than in the total population sample (17%). The prevalence of UI (n = 118) had increased ($p < 0.05$) from 30% in 1986 to 33% in 1995. Only two women were using a urinary catheter. Mortality in the women with a history of UTI (n = 254, 37%) was higher ($p < 0.001$) than in an aged-matched control group of women selected from the total population (n = 195, 28%). A total of 45% (n = 162) had received estrogen therapy at some time after the age of 60 years and 39% (n = 140) reported that they were currently taking low potency/dose estrogens.

Discussion: Elderly women with a history of UTI had a continued high prevalence of UTI and UI, and overall mortality was higher in these women than in an age-matched control group of women from the total population.