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Author(s):	M.C. Lapitan, P.H.C. Lim, E.R. Gatchalian, Asia-Pacific Continence Advisory
	Double Spacing
Institution	Changi General Hospital
City	Singapore
Country	
	Double Spacing
Title (type in CAPITAL LETTERS)	DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILE OF FEMALES WITH URINARY INCONTINENCE IN SOUTHEAST ASIA

Aims of the Study : The study was conducted to establish the prevalence of urinary incontinence (UI) among the female population in Southeast Asia. It also intended to describe condition as a health problem in term of the resulting degree of bother and the rate at which help is sought to address it. The study also aimed to identify the demographic factors associated with a higher occurrence of UI.

Methods : A questionnaire-based survey was performed in ten centers in the Philippines, Singapore, Malaysia, Indonesia and Thailand. The questionnaire containing multiple-choice queries on the different symptoms associated with UI and the degree of bother associated with its presence was formulated by a continence advisory panel, translated in the local dialect and validated. A demographic inquiry was also included in the questionnaire. The questionnaire was administered randomly to females consulting at the outpatient clinics for non-urological and non-gynaecological problems. The prevalence of urinary incontinence based on an affirmative response to the question on having ever leaked urine involuntarily in the past six months. A chi-square test for independence to analyse the relationship between demographic data and the occurrence of UI was done.

Results : A total of 24222 females were included in the study. The overall prevalence of UI was 14.8%. Nearly half (47.8%) of the incontinent population had the mixed type. Majority (77.4%) were not significantly bothered by the condition although a significant proportion (43.7%) sought help for their condition. Using the chi-square test for independence, older age, multiparity, manual labor, a positive family history, and a lower income were found to be associated with a greater occurrence of UI.

Conclusion : The study has shown that the problem of urinary incontinence among the females in Southeast Asia is comparable to western figures. The demographic factors found to be associated with the condition are similar to previous studies conducted on non-Asian populations although to a different degree. This is the first multi-nation report on the epidemiology of urinary incontinence among Asians.

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