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Ref. No. 476

Abstract Reproduction Form B-1

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Institution City Country	School of Health, Biological and Environmental Sciences, Middlesex University & Department of Medicine, University College London, London, UK
Title (type in CAPITAL LETTERS)	URODYNAMIC INVESTIGATION: ATTITIDES, EMBARRASSMENT AND EXPERIENCES OF UK PATIENTS

AIMS OF STUDY
Urodynamic studies continue to be important in the diagnosis and management of lower urinary tract dysfunction in women. Although there is some information pertaining to women's experience of these tests, there is little known about the attitude of women to the amount of pre-test information given and to the sex of the investigator. Previous work in related areas has suggested that women prefer a female health care worker (1) so this study aimed to describe the experiences of a sample of women attending the continence service for a routine cystometrogram and to investigate these attitudes. We hypothesized that women would experience significantly greater embarrassment when the test was performed by a male.

METHOD
Local ethical committee approval was obtained for the study. A self-completion questionnaire was given to women following their cystometrogram. This questionnaire explored aspects of the service related to the pre-test information given by the clinic, the conduct of urodynamic testing, sequelae of the tests. Embarrassment associated with the sex of the person performing the cystometrogram was assessed by a seven point scale ranging from not at all embarrassed to very embarrassed. Patients replies were compared with regard to the sex of the investigator (2). Patients were asked to return the questionnaire three days following their test. Cystometrogans were performed as previously described (3). No woman received antibiotics routinely following the tests. Analysis of the questionnaires was performed using SPSS, significance tests were performed using χ^2 .

RESULTS
Replies were received from 80 women (mean age 54, SD 13yrs), a response rate of 76%. 68(85%) of women were either a little or very anxious prior to the procedure, 90% of women found the information provided by the service either helpful or very helpful but only 36% of women felt that all of their concerns were dealt with. Women found the test uncomfortable (Table). 46 (58%) of women suffered some discomfort following the test and 8(10%) required some form of treatment within three days post testing.

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Abstract Reproduction Form B-2

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Women were not significantly more embarrassed by male rather than female urodynamicists. 24(25%) found the test embarrassing when performed by a female and 27(34%) by a male, (χ^2 , $p=0.61$)

	Urethral catheterisation n, (%)	Rectal catheterisation
Very uncomfortable	13 (16)	8 (10)
Some discomfort	39 (49)	36 (45)
No discomfort	28(35)	31 (39)

Conclusions

Urodynamic investigations are potentially unpleasant procedures, they are associated with considerable pre-appointment anxiety. Although information sent to patients was appreciated the majority would have welcomed more detailed information. The percentage of patients experiencing discomfort during and after the test was less than previous reports (4) but in a different population with a different test protocol. The need for treatment following the test was less than previously reported from this centre (5), although here we did not specify the particular treatment required. Women are not more embarrassed by having a man rather than a woman perform urodynamics, this suggests that factors other than gender may be important in the embarrassment causing potential of an intimate examination.

This cohort of women will be interviewed to pursue the issues of embarrassment and patient information needs using qualitative research methodology.

References

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2. *Journal of Advanced Nursing* 1997; **25**: 893-907
3. *J Urol* 1996; **151**: 1984-1988
4. *Neurourol Urodyn* 1997; **16**: 509-10
5. *Age Ageing* 1994; **23**: 62-4