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Title (type in CAPITAL LETTERS)	PREVALENCE OF URINARY INCONTINENCE IN AN URBAN POPULATION- IMPACT ON QUALITY OF LIFE AND SEXUAL FUNCTION

Aims of the Study: The aim of this study was to determine the prevalence of urinary incontinence as well as its impact on quality of life and sexual function in an urban population.

Patients & Methods: Voluntary health examinations free of charge, which are sponsored by the city council of Vienna, are regularly organised in the area of Vienna. During this health examination the following parameters are routinely assessed: 1) socio-demographic parameters including marital status, cigarette and alcohol consumption 2) a detailed medical history 3) assessment of all concurrent medical therapies 4) physical examination including an echocardiogram and spirometry 5) urinalysis with dipstick test 6) a blood serum sample to assess a total of 14 parameters, including liver and kidney function tests and full red and white blood count and 7) an incontinence questionnaire containing 23 questions addressing various aspects of urinary incontinence and voiding problems in detail, including their impact on daily activity, quality of life and sexual function.

Results: The data of a total 1202 participants (592 men; mean age 47.9 + 12.6 years and 610 women; mean age 48.8 + 13.5 years; age range 20 - 96 years) were included into this analysis. Mean age and age distribution was identical in both sexes ($p < 0.05$). Overall, 25.1% of women and 3.5% of men interviewed reported on episodes of urinary incontinence during the past 4 weeks. The prevalence of incontinence increased constantly with age as demonstrated in the following table:

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Age	20 - 29	30 - 39	40 - 49	50 - 59	60 - 69	>70
Women (n=610)	5.7%	12.2%	20.1%	34.0%	42.4%	35.1%
Men (n=592)	0	2.2%	3.2%	1.4%	9.1%	11.5%

The risk of urinary incontinence was 7.1 (4.6 - 13.0%; 95% CI) times higher in women than in men. 5.9% of women and 47.6% of men reported that their urinary incontinence lasted for more than 3 years. With respect to the impact of urinary incontinence on quality of life 23.8% of men and 13.7% women indicated that incontinence did not affect their quality of life at all. 38.1% men and 26.1% of women however, reported on a moderate to severe impairment on their quality of life by their incontinence status. Sexual life was significantly less impaired by urinary incontinence, as only 9.5% of men and 3.3% of women reported on a moderate to severe impairment of their sex-life by urinary incontinence. Sexual activity was not influenced by urinary incontinence in 57.1% of men and 7.9% of women.

Conclusion: Extrapolation of these prevalence data to the population presently living in Austria (approx. 8.0 mill) indicates that approximately 680 000 women and 101 000 men have urinary incontinence. Although "only" 26.1% of affected women and 8.1% men reported on moderate to severe impairment of quality of life, these data underline the high prevalence and socio-economic relevance of this disease. However, the impact of urinary incontinence on quality of life is significantly higher than that on sexual function.

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