

A PREVALENCE SURVEY OF URINARY INCONTINENCE AND RELATED SYMPTOMS AMONG THREE POPULATION GROUPS IN THE WESTERN CAPE, SOUTH AFRICA

Aims of Study

Urinary incontinence has a prevalence of 5 - 50% in Western populations, increasing with age. No study has as yet been undertaken in South Africa to investigate the different population groups on a comparative basis, with regard to urinary incontinence and related symptoms. This pilot study attempts to address the issue.

Methods

A survey was undertaken using the questionnaire on urinary incontinence designed by the Leicester MRC Group. Patients at primary health care clinics and at tertiary institutions were surveyed in face-to-face fashion. Factors analysed included demographics, obstetric history and a range of urinary symptoms.

Results

This is an ongoing survey with final results to be presented. To date, 209 Black women (Age 16-60, parity 0-5), 204 Caucasian women (Age 20-88, parity 0-5) and 232 Cape Coloured women (Age 12-70, parity 0-5) have been surveyed. A summary of the most important results is shown as follows:

	White	Black	Coloured
N	204	209	232
Urinary leakage	42%	42%	35%
Stress incontinence (weekly or more)	20%	22%	21%
Urge incontinence (weekly or more)	25%	30%	27%
Frequency	15%	9%	11%
Nocturia	34%	55%	40%
Urgency	21%	22%	25%

Black women were least likely to have spoken to someone about their urinary problems and most likely to want assistance, as compared to the other groups. They were also the group most likely to be bothered a lot by their symptoms.

Conclusions

Interim analysis shows a surprisingly high prevalence of urinary leakage in the Black female population, particularly of urge incontinence, when compared to the other population groups. Nocturia also appears to have a high prevalence in this population group. Completion of the study and final analysis are awaited.