

PREVALENCE OF URINARY INCONTINENCE IN UNSELECTED BRAZILIAN COMMUNITY-LIVING WOMEN OVER FIFTEEN YEARS OLD, BY DIRECT APPROACH.

Aims of Study The aims of this study were to assess, by direct approach, the prevalence and severity of urinary leakage in women over fifteen years.

Methods A questionnaire was applied in about 15% of the female representative population, at home or at work, in a country area and in town by a special training team of researchers couple. The women were personally interviewed. The city of Vassouras is located 200 kilometers from Rio de Janeiro, with a population of 31,451, including 16,261 women, the demographical and social structure are fairly representative of Brazil. College students and women institutionalized were excluded. Urinary incontinence was defined as any involuntary loss of urine. Stress urinary incontinence was defined as involuntary loss of urine with coughing, laughter, lifting weight, while urge incontinence was defined as a leak of urine after urge to go to toilet. Association between these two types was classified as mixed. Urinary leakage different of these two types was defined as other type. Data collected were age, race, school level, number of pregnancy, type of delivery, pads used, number of leak per day, doctor's appointment or talk to anyone about urinary leakage and also if leak was or not considerate a normal condition.

Results The mean age in years was 40.9, median 39 and percentile 75% were 53 with a low school level (low elementary, 15.3%, elementary, 45.6%, high school 26% college 12.7%). The pregnancy mean rate was 2.35, with a normal delivery mean rate of 2.3 and cesarean mean rate of 0.65. Only 292 of 1042 women were never pregnant (28%) and 178 were only once (17.1%). The prevalence of urinary incontinence was 15.7%. Prevalence of urinary incontinence clearly increased with age (fig.1). The mean age of incontinent women was 50.87 years, median 51, against mean age of 38.9 years, median 37 ($p < 0.001$). The mean period of urinary leakage was 58.6 months, with median of 20, percentile 25% of one and percentile 75% of 60 months. The majority women with urinary incontinent (65.8%) didn't leak every day while 23.3% had urine leak one to tree times and just 11% four or more (fig 2). Stress urinary incontinence, urge-incontinence, mixed and other types were found in 31.3%, 38.6%, 26.4%, and 3.7%, respectively (fig. 3). Only 25.2 % found there condition of incontinence as normal and 26% used pads. Although 52.8% had talked with a physician and 45.4 % had talked with someone, only 9.6% had been submitted to urinary incontinence surgery. At significance statistical level of 5% ($p < 0.005$) we found no association between incommodes and type of incontinence, but there was significant statistical association between incommode and use of pads.

Conclusion To the best of our knowledge, this is the first study of prevalence of urinary incontinence in Brazil, involving a large community population. Since the population of this city is equivalent to the Brazilian people, we can assume that these findings represent reasonably the country situation.

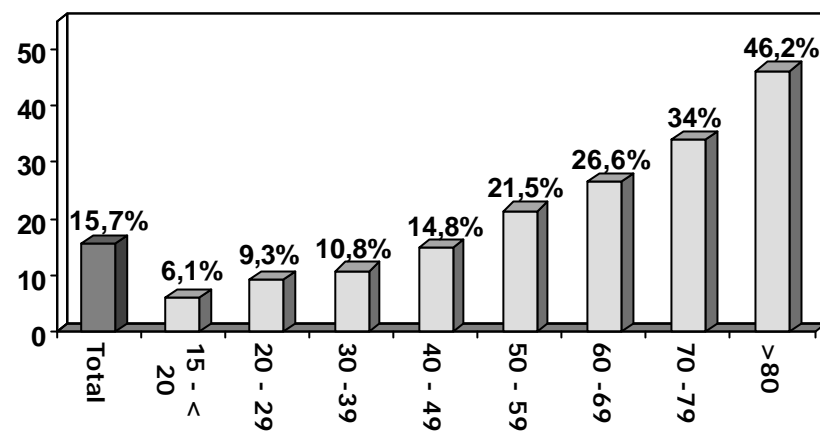


Fig. 1 -Prevalence of UI (any leakage) in women 15 years +

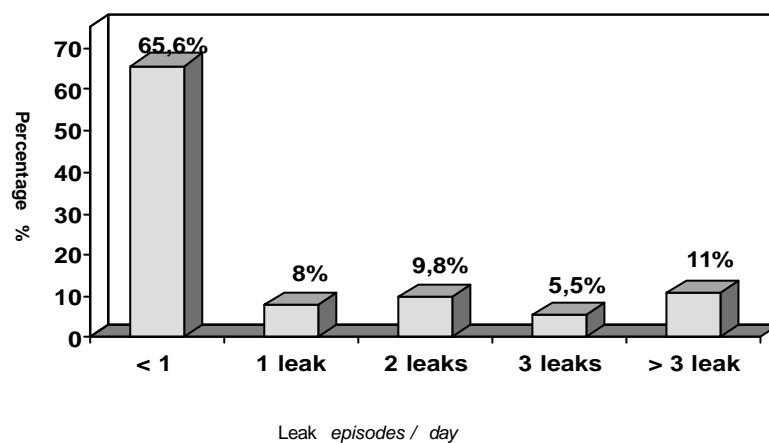


Fig. 2 -Severity of the incontinence

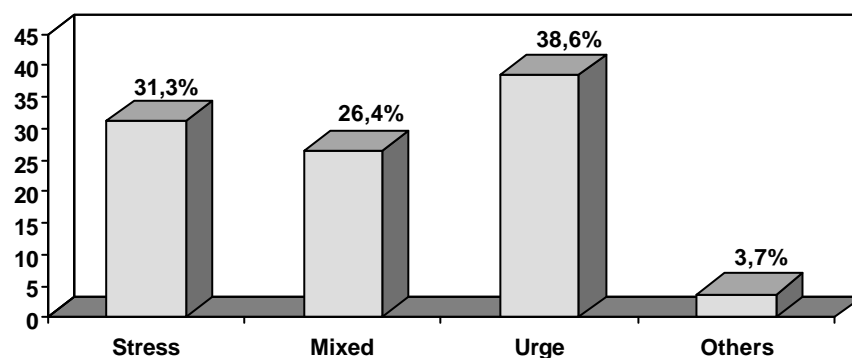


Fig. 3 - Relative proportions of UI among women in