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CONTINENCE STATUS ONE YEAR AFTER CESSATION OF ORGANISED PELVIC FLOOR MUSCLE TRAINING

Aims of Study
The aim of this study was to assess the continence status in a group of women one year after cessation of a six months organised pelvic floor muscle training program (1).

Methods
The present study was a follow up study of a single blind, randomised controlled trial assessing the effect of pelvic floor muscle training with and without biofeedback in women with urodynamic stress incontinence (1). The training program of the original study consisted of six months of pelvic floor muscle training comprising three sets of 10 contractions three times per day. All participants met a physiotherapist for instructions in correct pelvic floor muscle contraction, and individual training sessions, motivation and monitoring of pelvic floor muscle strength once per week during the first month, and every second week during the next four months. The primary outcome measure was gram of urinary leakage at a pad test with standardised bladder volume. Women with 2 gram or less of leakage on a standardised pad test were classified as continent.

Results
All women who had participated in the randomised controlled trial were invited to take part in the one-year follow up study. Across the time of the study, several physical and social constraints resulted in some women being unable to meet for the follow up assessment. One year after cessation of the training program 70 of 94 women in the original study agreed to attend urodynamic assessments and the standardised pad test. Mean age (range) was 48 (30-70) years, and mean (range) duration of symptoms before attending the randomised controlled trial was 10 (1-25) years. No specific characteristics of the group of withdrawals were found. At the one-year follow up 53% of the women were classified as continent (≤ 2 grams of leakage on a standardised pad test), the percentage was the same as at the assessment directly after the pelvic floor muscle training period. Seventy-two percent of the women whom were classified as continent immediately after cessation of the training program were still continent at the one year follow up assessment, nine new women were cured, and ten women had returned to previous status as incontinent. Gram of urinary leakage at the pad test had increased significantly (p=0.016) in the period without organised pelvic floor muscle training.

Conclusions
The same percentage of women were continent at the one year follow up test as at the assessment immediately after cessation of the pelvic floor muscle training program. However, the mean gram of urinary leakage had increased significantly. Individual follow up of each woman that was cured after six months training, showed that the effect of the pelvic floor muscle training still was present in the majority of the women one year later.

References
Effect of Adding Biofeedback to Pelvic Floor Muscle Training to Treat Urodynamic stress Incontinence. Obstet Gynecol 2002;100:730-9.