

VALIDATION OF THE CLINICAL BULBOCAVERNOSUS REFLEX

Aims of Study

To validate the clinically obtained bulbocavernosus reflex (BCR) by comparing it to the results of clitoroanal reflex (CAR) electrodiagnostic testing.

Methods

33 women with detrusor overactivity underwent clinical examination and electrodiagnostic testing including evaluation of CAR latency using a Nicolet Viking IIe electrodiagnostic instrument, stimulating the paraclitoral area was stimulated on each side in turn with paired stimuli while recording anal sphincter compound muscle action potentials bilaterally using surface patch electrodes. The results of clinical and electrodiagnostic testing were compared.

Results

The BCR was clinically present on at least one side in 28 (85%) women, and thought to be clinically bilaterally absent in 7 (15%). Electrophysiologic testing revealed CARs to be at least unilaterally present in 30 (91%) patients. When the BCR was clinically present, a CAR was recorded in 92% of patients. Of the 7 women with clinically absent BCR, just one had absent CARs.

	CA reflex present	CA reflex absent	Total
BCR present	24	2	26
BCR absent	6	1	7
Total	30	3	33

Chi-squared test of association between these dichotomous variables showed no significant association between the variables (Chi-squared(1)=0.58, p=1).

Conclusions

In this sample of women with detrusor overactivity the clinical bulbocavernosus reflex did not correlate with the electrically obtained reflex.