

ANXIETY IN SPECIALIST CLINICS.**Hypothesis / aims of study**

There are published data regarding women's views on urodynamics, showing high levels of anxiety, and embarrassment (1,2). Colposcopy also been studied and shown to produce greater anxiety than major abdominal surgery (3). This is thought to reflect the possibility of a diagnosis of malignancy. We are undertaking a prospective study comparing state (procedure related) and trait (background) anxiety in women undergoing urodynamic investigations with women attending other specialist gynaecology outpatient departments. We present an analysis of data comparing urodynamics and colposcopy clinics.

Study design, materials and methods

The most commonly used psychometric method of assessing anxiety is the Spielberger State Trait Anxiety Inventory (STAI). We asked women aged 20-69, attending our one-stop urodynamics clinic and colposcopy outpatients for the first time, to complete the inventory immediately prior to the clinic appointment.

The questionnaire takes approximately 10 minutes to complete and is appropriate for aged 11-12 years reading level. Recipients are asked to answer 20 questions each for state- and trait- anxiety against a four point Likert scale. Higher score equates with greater anxiety. Scores are then plotted against normative population data to control for age and sex, to calculate a percentile ranking of anxiety levels.

We performed a paired samples t-test to compare the state and trait anxiety levels within each group and an ANOVA analysis to compare anxiety levels between the groups (SPSS, V11). Ethics approval was granted.

Results**Demographic details.**

The age difference is controlled by the use of normative population data

	UDS	Colposcopy
n=	31	22
Mean age	45.2 years *	33.5 years *
Range	25 - 68 years p= 0.0001	23 – 49 years

Summary of scores and ranking against normative data

	Range	Mean	SD
State score (colposcopy)	21-71	47.18	12.35
State score (urodynamics)	24-75	48.35	13.3
Trait score (colposcopy)	23-65	43.38	11.77
Trait score (urodynamics)	20-61	43.25	11.21
Ranked state score (colposcopy)	3-100	76.63	25.03
Ranked state score (urodynamics)	16-100	79.54	24.35
Ranked trait score (colposcopy)	7-100	70.14	30.46
Ranked trait score (urodynamics)	0-100	74.16	31.86

Comparison	Test	Significance
State UDS vs trait UDS	Paired t test	0.245
State colp vs trait colp	Paired t test	0.490
State UDS vs state colp	ANOVA	0.673
Trait UDS vs trait colp	ANOVA	0.649

Interpretation of results

There is no significant difference in state and trait anxiety within either group, and no significant difference in state scores and trait scores between the groups. The data confirm that the proneness to anxiety, and the actual anxiety levels prior to each clinic, are the same.

Concluding message

Attending specialist clinics imposes a significant psychological burden on women, but urodynamics not more than the others, and this should not be under-estimated. Measures to reduce anxiety need to be investigated and instituted.

References

1. Women's attitudes to urodynamics: a questionnaire survey. BJOG 1999; Vol 106(8):851-6
2. Anxiety during urodynamics. International Urogynaecology Journal Oct 2003 - Proceedings of the 28th Annual Meeting of the International Urogynaecology Association, Buenos Aires, Argentina (Supplement); S10
3. Anxiety levels in women attending colposcopy clinics for treatment for cervical intraepithelial neoplasia: a randomised trial of written and video information. Br J Obstet Gynae 2001; 108:482-4