

PREVALENCE OF INTERSTITIAL CYSTITIS IN HISPANIC PATIENTS WITH URINARY FREQUENCY AND URGENCY

Hypothesis / aims of study

Traditional epidemiologic studies have significantly underestimated interstitial cystitis (IC) prevalence in patients with complaints of urinary frequency and urgency. Our hypothesis was that IC is much more common in patients presenting with urinary frequency and urgency than previously believed, and IC should be considered in the differential diagnosis in these patients. The aims of this study were to determine the prevalence of IC in a fixed population of Hispanic patients with urinary frequency and urgency in comparison to the asymptomatic controls.

Study design, materials and methods

The subjects involved in this study were Hispanic women who were seen at our urogynecologic clinics. A total of 121 subjects were enrolled in this study. The symptomatic study group consisted of 64 consecutive Hispanic patients who presented with complaints of urinary frequency, urgency, and pelvic pain. However, urinary frequency and urgency were predominant symptoms in these subjects. There were 36 subjects in this group with only complaints of urinary frequency and urgency. The asymptomatic control group consisted of 57 consecutive Hispanic gynecological patients coming for annual examination and reported no history of urinary problem, pelvic pain or dyspareunia, but with similar demographic characteristics as the study group. We used the history, physical examination, validated Spanish version of the PUF (Pelvic Pain and Urgency/Frequency) scale, and PST (intravesical potassium sensitivity test) to determine the prevalence of IC in these two groups.

Results

Mean age of the study group subjects was 47 (ranged from 28 to 68) and median parity was 2 (ranged from 0 to 5). There were 45 pre-menopausal and 19 post-menopausal women in this group. Mean age of the control group was 43 (ranged from 20 to 71) and median parity was 2 (ranged from 0 to 6). There were 39 pre-menopausal and 18 post-menopausal women in this group. The demographic characteristics of the study and control groups were not significantly different. All subjects in the control group had PUF scores of 5 or less and the rate of positive of PST was 1.8%. All subjects in the symptomatic group had PUF scores of more than 5 and the rate of positive of PST was 73.4%. The difference in the prevalence rates of IC between the symptomatic group and control group was highly significant ($P < 0.0001$). For the subgroup with only urinary frequency and urgency, the prevalence rate of IC was 72.2%. This prevalence rate is also significantly higher ($P < 0.0001$) than the prevalence rate of IC in the control group.

Interpretation of results

The results of this study demonstrate that Hispanic women with complaints of urinary frequency and urgency have high prevalence of IC. The estimate of IC prevalence rates were 73.4% in patients with predominant symptoms and 72.2% in patients with only symptoms of urinary frequency and urgency. For these patients, IC should be considered in the differential diagnosis. Although this study involved only Hispanic patients and extrapolation of the data to the general population will have some limitations, the findings indicated that IC also deserves a greater consideration in the general urogynecologic and gynecologic patients presenting with urinary frequency and urgency.

Concluding message

IC is much more common in the Hispanic patients with complaints of urinary frequency and urgency than previously believed. In these women, a strong consideration should be given for underlying diagnosis of IC.

