Prevalence of bladder and bowel symptoms experienced by patients with general chronic pain

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Background & Aims

• Links between general chronic pain & bladder / bowel symptoms
  • Clinical experience
  • Evidence (Eliasson et al, Smith et al, Almansa C et al)
    • Predominately studies of women, poorly defined chronicity
• Prevalence of bladder and bowel symptoms in these patients when compared with general population data
  (AIHW 2006)
• Inform planning of services

Eliasson K et al. Manual Therapy 2008
Method

Patients with general chronic pain (>3 months) attending the community rehabilitation service

Questionnaire (anonymous)
  – Demographics, body pain chart
  – Validated symptom scores for
    • Urinary incontinence
    • Faecal incontinence
    • Constipation
Method

Comparison with national estimates

Australian Institute of Health and Welfare (AIHW)

- Men (1478) and women (1533)
- Urinary incontinence and faecal incontinence

Australian Longitudinal Women’s Health Study (ALWHS)

- Women (42 724)
- Constipation

Results

82 participants
- 53 women
- 29 men

Average age 58
- age range 26-83

Pain duration >12 months 84%
Reported symptom rates

- Urinary incontinence: 65.8%
- Faecal incontinence: 47.6%
- Constipation: 35.4%
Prevalence of urinary incontinence

Prevalence of faecal incontinence

Bartlett LM et al 2013, Rural & Remote Health
Constipation in Australian women

Chiarelli P et al. 2000. Int Urogynecol J
Incontinence and pain location

Urinary incontinence

Faecal incontinence

Strong associations:
Urinary incontinence & LBP (Fisher’s exact test p<0.01)
Faecal incontinence & LBP (Fisher’s exact test p<0.01)
Limitations

Limited number of participants
Potential bias
• Self selection
• Reliance on staff to recruit
Barriers to recruitment
Conclusions and recommendations

Men and women with general chronic pain have a higher prevalence of urinary & faecal incontinence

Strong associations exist between chronic LBP and both faecal incontinence and urinary incontinence

Take the opportunity to ask
Thank you