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Severity of symptoms as measured by the I-PSS questionnaire in 2035 adult males from Romania

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Background & Aim: Benign Prostatic Hyperplasia (BPH) is a common cause of Lower Urinary Tract Symptoms (LUTS) in older male patients. The severity of LUTS and the patient's perception about the disease are commonly measured using the International Prostate Symptom Score (I-PSS) questionnaire. The primary objective was to evaluate the symptoms of LUTS using the I-PSS questionnaire in an adult male population in Romania. A secondary objective was to model disease perception in these patients.

Methods: The study population comprised 2035 patients without prostate cancer who completed the I-PSS questionnaire during a routine visit to one of the 96 GPs participating in this study. BPH was present in 529 patients (26%). Patients with BPH had more often hypertension (85% vs 75%, $p=0.0003$) and cystitis (19% vs 7%, $p<0.001$). A linear regression model was constructed to estimate the perception as measured by question 8 of the I-PSS questionnaire.

Results: Urgency and weak stream were most often reported as severe (6% and 9% answered highest score). Average score was highest for nocturia (mean 1.8 points), followed by weak stream and urgency (1.5 and 1.3 points). Disease perception (mean 2.4 points) was higher in the BPH population (mean 3.1 vs 2.2 points, $p<0.001$). The symptoms were more severe in BPH patients (mean 11.79 vs 7.76; $p < 0.001$). The perception was directly correlated with the age of the patient, the symptom score, BPH and cystitis, and inversely to hypertension ($R^2 = 0.62$). There was a significant interaction between the symptom score with both age and BPH.

Conclusions: Disease perception was significantly correlated to the symptom score and various comorbidities. Follow up of the BPH negative population may yield additional insight regarding the ability of the I-PSS questionnaire to predict the clinical evolution of these patients.