

PS1.237

Interference of speculum lubrication in Papanicolaou test accuracy and pain relief - evidence based review

Sara Rocha(1), C Rodrigues(2), S Vieira(3), MC Baldaia(4), D Ferreira(1), B Serra(1), C Silva(5)

(1) UCSP B (Chaves 1), Portugal

(2) UCSB S. Neutel (Chaves 1), Portugal

(3) USF Alpendorada (Marco de Canaveses), Portugal

(4) USF Sta. Luzia (Paços de Ferreira), Portugal

(5) USF Aquae Flaviae, Portugal

Corresponding author: Dr Sara Rocha, ACES Alto Tâmega E Barroso, UCSP B - Chaves 1, Fafe, Portugal. E-mail: sara_rocha1299@hotmail.com

Introduction: in Portugal the cervical cancer is the fifth most frequent cancer in women. The Papanicolaou test is an effective and well-accepted screening tool against cervical cancer and an important reducer of mortality and morbidity of the disease. However, fear of pain during a vaginal examination may reduce the compliance for regular screening, therefore the physicians use lubricant on the speculum in an attempt to minimize the pain and discomfort of the patient.

Aims: To determine whether gel obscures cervical cytology and whether it decreases pain and discomfort for patients.

Methods: A search for articles using the MeSH terms speculum, lubricants, vaginal smears and pain published between January 2005 and July 2015 was conducted. The Strength of Recommendation Taxonomy of American Family Physician was used to assess the quality of studies, the levels of evidence and the strength of recommendations.

Results: of the 30 articles obtained were selected ten. Seven of them (four with evidence level 1 and 3 with evidence level 2) alleged that a small amount of lubricant does not affect the result of the cervical cytology. Two of these (evidence level 2) concluded that the lubricant does not decrease the pain and the discomfort of the patients during the exam. Another study claims that the pain relief only occurs in postmenopausal women. Only one study concluded that the pain relief occurs both in postmenopausal women and in women of childbearing age (evidence level 1). The remaining three articles (evidence level 2) affirm that the lubricant interferes with the cytology result.

Conclusion: The studies conclude that a small amount of water-based lubricant does not interfere with the quality of cervical cytology results, neither relieves the pain and discomfort during the exam (Streng of recommendation A).