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Overactive bladder: prevalence and impact on life quality

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Background & Aim: Overactive bladder (ORB) is characterized by urinary urgency, with or without incontinence, accompanied by increased urinary frequency and nocturia, symptoms with major impact on life quality. The prevalence is 17% in adults and increases with age. ORB has a multi-factorial etiology and its diagnosis and monitoring by the family doctor is very important. Our goal was to characterize the symptoms associated with the ORB and to estimate its prevalence among the patients with more than 40 years, affiliated to the USF Tejo (a Lisbon Primary Care Unit).

Method: A descriptive, observational study. Population: patients with ≥ 40 years affiliated to the USF Tejo - 8435. Sample: convenience - patients with ≥ 40 years who responded to the adapted questionnaire for ORB Validation (OAB-V8™) - 174 Statistical analysis (Excel).

Results: We studied 2.1% of the population: 33.9% were male and 66.1% female. The most prevalent symptom 'urinate frequently during the day' was also the most uncomfortable. 56.3% had a score ≥ 8 (high probability of ORB); of these, 33.7% are male and 66.3% female. On average, females had a higher score (17.0 ± 7.2) than males (14 ± 5.9). Evaluating only the elderly (≥ 65 years), the most prevalent symptom was 'waking up during the night because he/she had to urinate' and the more uncomfortable was 'urinate frequently during the day.' 58.4% had a score ≥ 8 ; of these, 57.6% were male and 42.4% female.

Conclusions: Symptoms of ORB are very common in patients of the USF Tejo, especially among the elderly. Most patients have a high probability of suffering from this condition, in particular females. However, if we consider only the elderly, the men are more likely to have ORB. The sample, although small compared to the entire population, allows us to infer the prevalence and impact of the ORB condition.