

653

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HOW RELIABLE IS THE PAD TEST FOR QUANTIFYING URINARY INCONTINENCE?

Hypothesis / aims of study

The pad test is widely accepted as a measure of the seriousness of urinary incontinence, although no clear standard exists regarding the volume of lost urine. Our study aims to quantify the volume of urine that makes a patient change the pad, since this impacts the total daily number of pads.

Study design, materials and methods

Our prospective study included 10 women and 5 men with urinary incontinence, regardless the mechanism. We used XL size absorbent pads which were weighted dry and then submerged into water and weighted again, so a maximum capacity of 230 ml was measured. The patients were given the same type of absorbent pads and were requested to change them the way they usually did before. The patient had to weigh each pad after changing it and to enter the value in a table, for two consecutive days, using the same scale, also provided by us. The patients were also asked to note if they changed the pad because they were feeling wet or because of other cause.

Results

In the female group, when they reported feeling wet, the urine volume ranged between 10 and 230 ml while when the pad was changed for other reason, the volume ranged between 0 and 230 ml. In one individual, the average volume per pad ranged between 11 and 230 ml in this group. In the male group, the wet sensation associated volumes between 50 and 230 ml and the other reason for changed had behind it volumes of 0 to 230 ml. In men, the average volume per pad ranged between 18 and 230 ml.

Concluding message

Evaluating the daily volume of lost urine using the number of pads is unreliable. It can be of some use for monitoring a single individual but it loses sense when trying to compare larger number of patients.

Disclosures

Funding: none **Clinical Trial:** Yes **Public Registry:** No **RCT:** No **Subjects:** HUMAN **Ethics not Req'd:** observational study using current standard of care **Helsinki:** Yes **Informed Consent:** No