

High pelvic floor muscle tone impacting urinary incontinence: A case study

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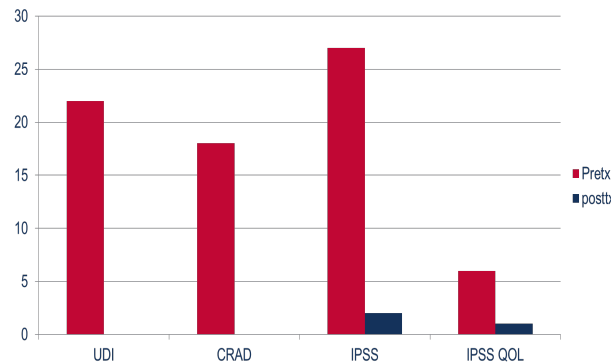
Case background

- 50 y.o male with 6.75 year hx of lumbar injury with onset of urinary urgency, mixed incontinence and pelvic pain at that time.
- Scheduled for lumbar fusion however needed a urodynamic study to r/o neurogenic bladder. Unable to tolerate study due to pain with catheter placement therefore referred to PT.
- Using 2 Depends per day, with frequency at 14x per day and up 4x at night.
- Pain in back, groin and pelvis 10/10 at worst, 8/10 at best.

Treatment Course

- 6 weekly sessions.
- Education on bladder retraining, posture, body mechanics, and bowel management.
- Manual techniques to adductors, iliopsoas, gluteals, and levator ani rectally.
- Home stretching program for adductors, hip flexors, hip rotators and quads.
- Relaxation exercises of diaphragmatic breathing, progressive neuromuscular relaxation and guided motor imagery for urge control.

Outcomes



Results

- By the 3rd session bowel movements painfree, able to delay urination 4 hours and only leaked in the shower due to urge.
- At the 6th session no leakage reported and not using Depends.
- Urinary frequency WNL at every 2-4 hours, bowel movements 6-7x per week.
- No pain reported in the pelvic floor/groin.
- UDI and CRAD decreased to 0 with no urodynamic study needed.

Implications

With stress and urge incontinence muscle weakness may not be the primary cause and strength programs would increase symptoms by up-training muscle tightness.

Pelvic floor assessment should also include an evaluation of the ability to relax the pelvic floor and the excursion of the contraction. The patient maybe only contracting in the last degrees of available motion.

Other examples

89 year old male with blood in urine, nocturia of 5x per night, and leakage with urge/post void. Pelvic floor strengthening for 1 week increased leakage, frequency and amount of blood and nocturia.

After 2 sessions of manual techniques, blood in the urine resolved. After 6 sessions up 1x at night with 24 hour frequency of urination decreased from 11 to 6 with resolution of leakage. UDI decreased from 11 to 0.