

Bladder distension - aspects of a healthcare-related injury

Eva Joelsson-Alm
Intensive Care Nurse, PhD
Södersjukhuset, Stockholm, Sweden
eva.joelsson-alm@sl.se



**"I'm not ill,
just damaged for the
rest of my life"**

Definitions

- **Urinary retention**
Inability to empty the bladder
- **Overdistended bladder**
Bladder volume > 500 ml

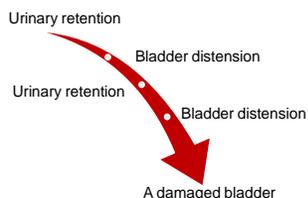


Risk factors for urinary retention

- Age
- Gender
- Bed rest
- Pain
- Stress
- Drugs
- Surgery and anaesthesia



Urinary retention and bladder distension



Can cause long-term– sometimes lifelong problems

Indwelling or intermittent catheterization?



Systematic review with meta-analysis 2015

- Patients with total hip- or knee arthroplasty
- Compared intermittent catheterization with indwelling catheter treatment for maximum 48 h
- No difference in urinary tract infections. More urinary retention/risk for bladder distension with intermittent catheterization

Background

- 2001 – many adverse event reports at the recovery ward about urinary retention and large bladder volumes
- Care developer – responsible for patient safety issues
- Need for better guidelines

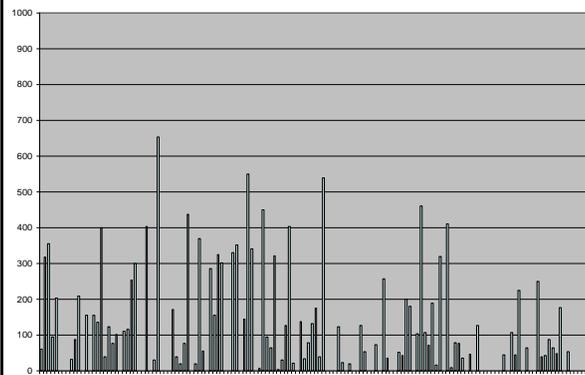
First study...



Joelsson-Aim E, Nyman CR, Lindholm C, Ulfvarson J, Svensen C. Perioperative bladder distension: A prospective study. *Scand J Urol Nephrol*. 2009; 43: 58-62.

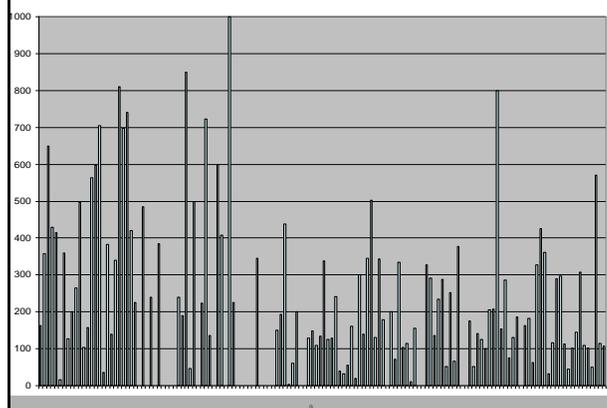
7

Preoperative scanning before anaesthesia (ml)



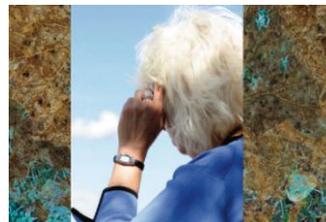
8

Postoperative scanning (ml)



9

Living with micturition problems after bladder distension



Joelsson-Aim E, Nyman CR, Svensen C, Ulfvarson J. Micturition problems after bladder distension during hospitalization in Sweden. "I'm not ill, just damaged for the rest of my life". *Nursing Research* 2014; 63: 418-425.

10

Aim

- Explore how micturition problems after bladder distension affect the patient's everyday life
- Explore patients' experiences of having been exposed to a healthcare-related injury

11

Design

- Narrative interviews with patients with bladder damage due to overdistension
- The injury should have been classified as an avoidable healthcare-related injury at the Swedish Patient Insurance LÖF
- Qualitative content analysis

12

Informants

- 13 women and seven men
- Age at injury: 28 yrs – 78 yrs (median 54 yrs)
- Diagnosis/therapy at injury:
 - childbirth
 - gynecologic surgery
 - pregnancy
 - orthopedic surgery
 - infection
 - general surgery
- Micturition status at interview:
 - daily clean intermittent catheterization (11)
 - indwelling Foley catheter (1)
 - other micturition problems (7)
 - no problems (1)

13

At the time of injury

- No one understood the seriousness
- Lack of knowledge
- Insufficient routines
- Mistrust



14

Constraints in everyday life

- Dependent on access to clean toilets
- Dependent on disposables
- Clothing restrictions
- Limitations on social life



15

Impact on everyday life

- Suffering
 - pain
 - urinary tract infection
 - impaired sex life
- Concerns for the future



16

To report an injury

No help from the responsible caregiver

Ambivalence towards filing a report

A strong wish to prevent harm to others

Our job!

17

Swedish national guidelines in Vårdhandboken



18