

Lifestyle Modification Might Help Men with Lower Urinary Tract Symptoms

But standardized education in primary care practices did not lessen referrals to urology.

Older men with lower urinary tract symptoms (LUTS) related to voiding or retention of urine often receive medications for prostatic hypertrophy or bladder dysfunction or are referred for urologic evaluation. Lifestyle modification might be a useful first-line approach, but it has not been evaluated formally in a primary care setting.

In a cluster-randomized trial conducted in 30 U.K. primary care practices, 1000 symptomatic men (mean age, 68) who had reported LUTS in the previous 5 years and had not undergone surgery were randomized to usual care or a standardized lifestyle modification program. Patients in the intervention arm met with a trained nurse or healthcare assistant who provided a booklet about lifestyle modifications for LUTS (e.g., fluid restriction, pelvic floor exercises, sleep hygiene) and gave individualized instruction. Follow-up contacts occurred 1, 4, and 12 weeks later.

At baseline, mean scores on the widely used 35-point IPSS scale of prostate symptom severity was about 14 in both groups. Twelve months later, the average adjusted score was 1.8 points lower in the intervention group than in the control group; the difference was statistically significant but less than the prespecified minimally clinically important difference of 2 points. Referrals to urology did not differ between arms.

COMMENT

Without trained assistants, time-constrained U.S. providers might struggle to replicate this intervention. Nevertheless, motivated patients and providers might find the study booklet useful — it is available online. — **Bruce Soloway, MD**

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