Abstract

Objectives: To describe the characteristics of urinary incontinence (UI) and to evaluate its impact on health-related quality of life (QOL) and depressive symptoms in women referred for physical therapy at a university hospital. Methods: A descriptive cross-sectional study with demographic data collection related to UI. All women were evaluated through examination and also through depression and QOL questionnaires. Results: Forty-eight women were evaluated (53.8±10.9 years), 47.9% with mixed UI (MUI), 39.6% with stress UI (SUI) and 12.5% with urge UI (UUI). In 50% of the cases the urinary loss lasted between 3.3 and 10 years. There was no significant difference in the pelvic floor muscle strength among the different types of UI (P>0.05). Depressive symptoms were detected in 37% of the women. Changes in the QOL were observed in all three groups of women with UI. According to the King¿s Health Questionnaire (KHQ), women with MUI presented more compromised health perception and greater physical, social, daily activity and personal relationship limitations (P<0.05). The women with MUI presented a worse health perception (P<0.05) according to the WHOQOL-Bref. Conclusion: Depressive symptoms were detected in more than a third of the women whose quality of life was adversely affected and the greatest impact was observed in the patients with MUI.

Keywords
Urinary incontinence, women’s health, quality of life, depression.