

Quality of life and sexual activity during treatment of Bartholin's cyst or abscess with a Word catheter.

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Abstract

OBJECTIVES:

Cysts and abscesses of the Bartholin glands are a common occurrence in gynecologic or general practice. Little is known about restrictions in patient's daily life and sexual activity during treatment of Bartholin's cysts in general and especially with the Word catheter. This study is to assess the Quality of Life and Sexual Activity during treatment of Bartholin cysts and abscesses with the Word-catheter.

STUDY DESIGN:

Between March 2013 and May 2014 30 women were included in the study. Pain before treatment and during catheter insertion and removal was assessed using a standardized VAS scale. Health-related quality of life was assessed with the Short-Form-12-Health-Survey. Follow up Sexual Activity Questionnaire was administered to investigate sexual limitations. During treatment patient self-reported to a pain-diary (VAS 0-10).

RESULTS:

Pain levels decreased from a 3 [0-10] on day 1 to 0 [0-6] on day 6 with the median staying at 0 for the remaining treatment period. Discomfort and pain during sexual activity decreased significantly from initial presentation to end of treatment. The mental component summary score of the SF 12 increased significantly from 46.94±10.23 before treatment to 50.58±7.16 after treatment ($p=0.016$); the physical component summary score did not change significantly.

CONCLUSIONS:

The Word catheter is well tolerated for the treatment of Bartholin's cysts and abscesses with few and no serious side effects and little impingement of sexual health. A more relevant informed consent ahead of treatment, specifically with regard to pain in the first few days after catheter placement, might further increase acceptance of the catheter and adjust patient expectations.

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KEYWORDS:

Abscess; Bartholin; Cyst; Quality of life; Sexual activity; Word catheter