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Kontaktperson
Sophia Ehrström
sophia.ehrstrom@ds.se

Chronic Stress in Women with Localized Provoked Vulvodynia

Författare: Sophia Ehrström, Dan Kornfeld, Eva Rylander, Nina Bohm-Starke
Karolinska Institutet, Department of Clinical Sciences Danderyd Hospital, Division of Obstetrics and Gynecology, Division of Surgery, St Görans hospital, Stockholm

Objective

To evaluate the degree of stress in women with localized provoked vulvodynia.

Methods

Forty-one women with localized provoked vulvodynia and 35 healthy control women self-collected saliva for analysis of cortisol. Thirty-three patients and 28 controls completed an internet based validated questionnaire about perceived stress at work and in private life. A gynecological examination was performed.

Results

Morning rise salivary cortisol was blunted in women with localized provoked vulvodynia ($p < 0.05$). Analysis of the stress-questionnaire Docco® revealed that these women also showed more signs of burnout ($p < 0.005$), listlessness ($p = 0.01$), emotional ($p < 0.05$) and bodily symptoms of stress ($p < 0.005$) compared to control subjects. Type D personality was more common in patients ($p = 0.05$).

Conclusion

More women with localized provoked vulvodynia showed signs of chronic stress, compared to healthy, control women of the same age.