Urology for People

What’s Up in Urology Journal, Autumn 2008?

Urology for People is a new section in the Urology Journal for providing people a summary of what is published in this journal and describing urological entities in a simple language. It is the second issue in which this section is added. The Persian translation of this article is available from www.uj.unrc.ir.

It is noteworthy that the findings in medical papers are usually not directly applicable in clinical practice and patients should consult their physicians before any utilization of the results of medical studies.

OBJECTS IN BLADDER
Several surgeons have reported detection of an object called foreign body in the bladder. These can be surgical instruments or fragments of catheters, intrauterine contraceptive devices that are migrated to the bladder, and objects inserted into the urethra. Dr Rafique from Pakistan has reported his 16 patients with such objects in their bladder and has reviewed all the related reports around the world. Most of the foreign bodies were surgical gauze remained in the bladder after an operation (mistake by the surgical team) or intrauterine contraceptive devices migrated from the uterus in women. Self-insertion of the objects is another common cause, which is mostly seen in mentally challenged patients. Also, insertion of a thermometer in females, whose urethra is short, may lead to slipping of the device into the bladder. Dr Rafique has also described the methods to extract the objects attempted by the surgeons so far. Most of the foreign bodies can be removed by endoscopic methods; an instrument called cystoscope is inserted into the bladder and the object is removed through the urethra.

Women should be careful about using intrauterine device, and if lost, they should consult with their physician to make sure it has not migrated into other organs. If they refer late, a stone may be formed around the device that makes its removal difficult. Also, parents and care givers to mentally challenged patients should be cautious about this problem and take any prolonged urinary complaint seriously.

HOW TO MINIMIZE COMPLICATIONS AFTER CIRCUMCISION
Circumcision in boys is a common surgical operation, especially in Moslem nations. The operation is safe and usually, no problem occurs thereafter. However, a small number of boys with circumcision may suffer from narrowing of the tip of their urethra. Dr Bazmamoun and his colleagues in Hamedan decided to advise a group of parents whose boys were circumcized to rub a lubricant jelly on circumcision site each time they change the child’s diaper. They compared children in this group with other circumcised boys and found that a smaller percentage of the children in the first group developed narrowing of the urethral tip (namely, meatal stenosis) and infection of the wound.

Lubrication of the circumcision site has been recommended by some surgeons; however, its benefits had not been clearly shown in any studies before Dr Bazmamoun reported their study results. Parents can discuss what they are required to do after circumcision of their children, and lubrication is an option that should be done.
DO GENES HAVE A ROLE IN BLADDER CANCER?
You might have heard that some factors like smoking can increase the risk of bladder cancer. Recently, genetic variations or disorders have also been added to the list of such factors. However, in contrast to the matter of smoking, the role of genes has not been confirmed yet, and scientists are still working on a series of genes that may cause, or let’s say attribute to the development of bladder cancer. Dr Karimianpour and associates assessed the RAS gene in a group of patients with bladder cancer in Tehran, and surprisingly, they found no impaired RAS gene in their patients. This gene has been suggested by many researchers around the world to have a role in bladder cancer, and the study by Dr Karimianpour shows that in Iranian patients, RAS gene might not be a cause. However, studies on a larger number of patients are required to make a stronger conclusion.

SAFFRON FOR INFERTILITY?
Herbal medicine is popular in folk medicine, but its efficacy should be assessed by scientific methods. Recently, a trend has been observed in Iran, and also the world, towards using herbs in modern medicine. In Iran, saffron is an attractive herb in folk medicine, with a long list of its benefits. To scrutinize the potential usage of saffron, Dr Heidary and his research team carried out a study on infertile men. They prescribed saffron, solved in milk, for 3 months and found that the number and quality of the sperm of the participants improved to a great extent. This interesting finding can be the primary step for further studies. The effect of saffron can be confirmed in a study of a larger number of patients when compared with a control group of infertile men who do not use saffron. This local herb may have a role in the future of modern medicine, but it would be an expensive drug!

AVICENNA AND HIS MODERN SCIENTIFIC VIEWPOINT
Avicenna, a great Iranian scientist has written the most famous medical book in the history. A thousand years ago, he donated a treasure to the world named Canon of Medicine. Dr Madineh, a urologist interested in this book, has selected some chapters of the Canon that are about bladder and its diseases. In his article, he shows the similarities of Avicenna’s theories with modern theories. Readers may find it interesting that 10 centuries ago, Avicenna could through away the superstitious beliefs in medicine and substitute them with experimental methodology we believe in now.