

Risk factors identified for incidence of vulvodynia

January 13 2014

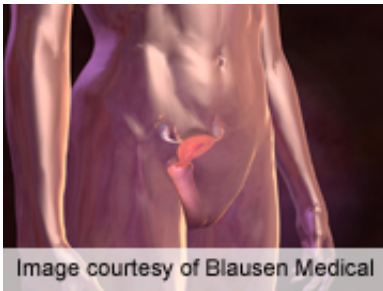


Image courtesy of Blausen Medical

(HealthDay)—The incidence of vulvodynia varies with age, ethnicity, and marital status, and is associated with previous symptoms or intermediate symptoms not meeting criteria for vulvodynia, according to a study published online Jan. 7 in *Obstetrics & Gynecology*.

Barbara D. Reed, M.D., M.S.P.H., from the University of Michigan in Ann Arbor, and colleagues conducted a longitudinal population-based study of [women](#) in southeast Michigan to assess the incidence rates of and risk factors for vulvodynia. Over a 30-month period, a validated survey-based screening test was repeated at six-month intervals. Onset of vulvodynia was assessed for 1,786 women who screened negative for vulvodynia at baseline and were followed through at least one additional survey.

The researchers found that the incidence of vulvodynia was 4.2 cases per 100 person-years. The rates were elevated for women who were younger (7.6 cases per 100 person-years at age 20 versus 3.3 cases at age 60); married or living as married (4.9 cases per 100 person-years); and Hispanic (9.5 cases per 100 person-years). In addition, the rates were increased for women who did not meet the criteria for vulvodynia on the initial survey, but did report symptoms of vulvar pain (11.5 per 100 person-years) and for those with past symptoms indicative of vulvodynia (7.5 cases per 100 person-years). Baseline sleep disturbance, chronic pain in general, specific comorbid pain disorder, and specific comorbid psychological disorders were associated with increased risk of new-onset vulvodynia.

"Onset is more likely among women with previous symptoms of vulvodynia or those with intermediate [symptoms](#) not meeting criteria for vulvodynia and among those with pre-existing sleep, psychological, and comorbid pain disorders," the authors write. "This suggests vulvodynia is an episodic condition with a potentially identifiable prodromal phase."

More information: [Abstract](#)

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