

How do symptoms of cystitis, overactive bladder differ?

May 9 2023, by Elana Gotkine



The characteristics of pain, pressure, discomfort, and urgency vary for

patients with interstitial cystitis/bladder pain syndrome (IC/BPS) and those with overactive bladder (OAB), according to a study published online March 30 in *BMC Urology*.

Angelica Gousse, M.D., from the Washington University School of Medicine in St. Louis, and colleagues examined the sensations of [bladder](#) "pressure" and "discomfort" as distinct from "pain" and "urgency" in IC/BPS and OAB. Twenty-seven IC/BPS patients and 51 OAB patients rated their [bladder pain](#), pressure, discomfort, and urinary urgency on numeric rating scales (scale of 0 to 10).

The researchers found that the mean numeric ratings of pain, pressure, discomfort, and urinary urgency were almost identical among IC/BPS patients (6.6 ± 2.1 , 6.0 ± 2.5 , 6.5 ± 2.2 , and 6.0 ± 2.8 , respectively). Very strong three-way correlations were observed between pain, pressure, or discomfort. The mean numeric ratings of pain, pressure, and discomfort were similarly and significantly lower than urgency among OAB patients (2.0 ± 2.6 , 3.4 ± 2.9 , and 3.4 ± 2.9 , respectively, versus 6.1 ± 2.6).

In OAB, the correlations between urgency and pain and between urgency and pressure were weak, while the correlation between urgency and discomfort was moderate. Bladder/pubis pain was the most bothersome symptom of IC/BPS, while urinary urgency and daytime frequency were the most bothersome symptoms of OAB.

"These findings clearly confirmed 'pain' and 'urgency' as cardinal and most bothersome symptom of IC/BPS and OAB, respectively," the authors write. "In future studies, it would also be beneficial to examine whether the discomfort was related to 'fear of pain' (which will point to IC/BPS) versus 'fear of leakage' (which will point to OAB)."

More information: Angelica Gousse et al, Assessment of bladder pressure and discomfort symptoms: How do overactive bladder differ

from interstitial cystitis/bladder pain syndrome patients?, *BMC Urology* (2023). [DOI: 10.1186/s12894-022-01164-8](https://doi.org/10.1186/s12894-022-01164-8)

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