Prevalence of Myofascial Chronic Pelvic Pain and the Effectiveness of Pelvic Floor Physical Therapy

M. A. Bedaiwy, B. Patterson and S. Mahajan

Division of Female Pelvic Medicine and Reconstructive Surgery, Departments of Obstetrics and Gynecology, and Urology, University Hospitals Case Medical Center, Cleveland, Ohio


OBJECTIVE: To determine the prevalence of myofascial pain and the outcome of transvaginal pelvic floor physical therapy for the treatment of chronic pelvic pain caused by myofascial pelvic pain in a tertiary care facility.

STUDY DESIGN: A retrospective chart review was performed on all women who presented to our facility between January 2005 and December 2007. Those diagnosed with myofascial pelvic pain and referred for transvaginal pelvic floor physical therapy over this 3-year period were evaluated. Participants with an initial pain score of > or = 4, myofascial pelvic pain on examination, and who attended 2 or more physician visits were included in the analysis. Patient physical examination findings, symptoms, and verbal pain ratings were reviewed.

RESULTS: In all, 146 (13.2%) of 1,106 initially screened patients were diagnosed with myofascial pain. Seventy-five (51%) of the 146 patients who were referred for physical therapy were included, and 75% had an initial pain score of > or = 7. Pain scores significantly improved proportional to the number of physical therapy visits completed, with 63% of patients reporting significant pain improvement.

CONCLUSION: Transvaginal physical therapy is an effective treatment for chronic pelvic pain resulting from myofascial pelvic pain.