

## **Comparative analysis of the frequency of lower urinary tract dysfunction among institutionalised and non-institutionalised children.**

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**OBJECTIVES:** To evaluate the level of symptoms of lower urinary tract dysfunction (LUTD) in orphans in institutions, and compare these data with schoolchildren of the same age group who were not institutionalised, as LUTD in children is related to factors such as social isolation and low self-esteem, with other psychological changes also being cited, although it is unknown whether these problems are primary or secondary to the symptoms of LUTD.

**PATIENTS AND METHODS:** Children institutionalised in orphanages with no parental presence and who are isolated from a family environment are probably more sensitive to psychological disturbances. Psychological changes have been associated with symptoms of urgency and urinary incontinence. Thus 89 orphans were compared with 143 schoolchildren not in institutions. A questionnaire was devised and completed by the care-taking staff in the orphanage, while for the schoolchildren the parents completed the questionnaire. The mean age in the institutionalised children was 7.9 years and that of the control group 7.8 years ( $P = 0.32$ ). Thirty-nine (44%) of the orphans were boys, vs 74 (54%) of the control group ( $P = 0.17$ ).

**RESULTS:** The incidence of urgency, diurnal urinary incontinence, nocturnal enuresis and constipation in the orphans and in the control group were: 45 (51%) and 57 (40%) ( $P = 0.17$ ), 36 (40%) and 19 (13%) ( $P < 0.001$ ), 39 (47%) and 38 (27%) ( $P = 0.002$ ), and 27 (30%) and 43 (30%) ( $P = 0.76$ ), respectively.

**CONCLUSION:** Children living in orphanages have a significantly higher level of diurnal urinary incontinence and nocturnal enuresis than those not in an institution.

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