

Rating Common Genitourinary, Gynecologic & Breast Disorders

- Almost all Genitourinary Conditions are rated as either:
 - Renal dysfunction
 - Voiding dysfunction (3 types)
 - Urinary tract infection

Or Genitourinary Conditions may be rated as a Combination of the above

What we are talking about, what we are NOT talking about

- We are not talking about bowel movements (that is covered in digestive system)
- We are talking about diseases related to the urinary system and genital system

- Where DC refers to specific area of dysfunction (such as renal dysfunction), only predominant area of dysfunction considered for rating
- These areas of dysfunction may not cover all symptoms resulting from genitourinary conditions
- try to get dr. to describe all symptoms that are due to the condition

Renal Dysfunction

- Defined as problems with a kidney or kidneys that detract from the body's ability to adequately keep essential nutrients & clean out toxic substances from blood

Renal Dysfunction

- 100% regular dialysis, or precludes more than sedentary activity from 1 of following:
 - persistent edema & albuminuria; or,
 - BUN more than 80 mg%; or,
 - creatinine more than 8mg %; or,
 - markedly decreased function of kidney or other organ systems, esp. cardiovascular
- 80% Persistent edema & albuminuria with BUN 40 to 80mg%;
- or, creatinine 4 to 8mg%; or,
- generalized poor health characterized by lethargy, weakness, anorexia, weight loss, or limitation of exertion
- 60% Constant albuminuria w/ some edema; or,
- definite decrease in kidney function; or,
- hypertension 40% or more under DC 7101

Renal Dysfunction

- 30% Albumin constant or recurring w/ hyaline & granular casts or red blood cells; or,
- transient or slight edema or hypertension at least 10% under DC 7101

- 0% Albumin and casts w history of acute nephritis; or
- 0% hypertension under DC 7101

Voiding Dysfunction

- The rating schedule has 3 Subcategories of Voiding Dysfunction
 - 1. Urine leakage
 - 2. Urinary frequency
 - 3. Obstructed voiding

Urine Leakage

- Continual Urine Leakage, Post Surgical Urinary Diversion, Urinary Incontinence, or Stress Incontinence:
- 60% Requires using appliance or wearing absorbent materials must be changed > 4x/day
- 40% Requires wearing absorbent materials must be changed 2x to 4x/day
- 20% Requires wearing absorbent materials must be changed < 2x/day

Urinary Frequency

- 40% Daytime voiding interval less than one hour, or; wakening to void 5 or more x/night
- 20% Daytime voiding interval between 1 & 2 hours, or; wakening to void 3 to 4x/night
- 10% Daytime voiding interval between 2 & 3 hours, or; wakening to void 2x/night

Obstructed Voiding

- 30% Urinary retention requiring intermittent or continuous catheterization
- 10% Marked obstructive symptoms (hesitancy, slow or weak stream, decreased force of stream) w/ any 1 or combination of:
 1. Post void residuals >150 cc
 2. Uroflowmetry; markedly diminished peak flow rate (< 10 cc/sec)
 3. Recurrent UTIs secondary to obstruction
 4. Stricture disease req. dilatation every 2-3 mos.
- 0% Obstructive symptoms w/ or w/out stricture disease requiring dilatation 1 to 2 x/yr

Urinary Tract Infection (UTI)

- any infection of the urinary system
- The urinary system is composed of
 - The kidneys
 - The ureters
 - The bladder and
 - The urethra

Urinary Tract Infection

- If vet has poor renal function then rate as renal dysfunction
- 30% Recurring UTI w/ symptoms requiring drainage/frequent hospitalization >2x/yr and/or requiring continuous intensive management
- 10% Long-term drug therapy, 1-2 hospitalizations/yr and/or requires intermittent intensive management

Rating Common Genitourinary Conditions

- Most common
 - Erectile dysfunction (ED)
 - Diseases causing Urinary Frequency
 - Diseases causing Renal Dysfunction
 - Diseases rated under UTI (urinary tract infection)

Erectile Dysfunction (loss of erectile power)

- Sometimes rated under DC 7522
- DC 7522 provides 20% for “penis, deformity, with loss of erectile power”
- Under M21-1MR, Part III, Subpart IV, Chap. 4, Sec. E.20.d.
 - deformity must be evident, and
 - deformity *must* be accompanied by loss of erectile power
- ED is *not* compensable in the absence of penile deformity

Rating ED

- Showing a “deformity” is the hook— otherwise vet not entitled
- Deformity— “some part of the body is misshapen or malformed”—Peyronie’s disease

Rating ED

- consider claiming depression secondary to ED where appropriate
- Especially where drugs (such as Viagra) or devices (such as a pump) are of little or no effect ???

Rating ED—Special Monthly Comp

- if there is no penile deformity, loss of erectile power alone is compensated by awarding SMC based on loss of use of a creative organ
 - VA should award SMC for loss of use of a creative organ if loss of erectile power is shown, **with or without penile deformity**
 - VA can pay comp or award SC for **anatomical** loss of creative organ, when NSC loss of use of creative organ existed prior to anatomical loss in service
- M21-1MR, Part IV, Subpart II, Chap. 2, Sec. H.39.d.

Evaluation of UTI (claimed as chronic cystitis)

- To get from 0% to 30% based on UTI or urinary frequency
- VAE reported urinary frequency, with voiding intervals of 1 hr during day & waking to go 3-4x/night
- Vet reported hesitancy at times and problem w/ starting & stopping stream.
- Vet reported incontinence, esp. if bladder full, but does not require routine use of absorbent materials
- Vet reported must self catheterize 1x/month on intermittent basis

Evaluation of UTI (claimed as chronic cystitis)

- 30% granted b/c record showed urinary retention
- requiring intermittent or continuous catheterization
- higher eval of 40% percent not warranted unless record shows required wearing of absorbent materials which must be changed 2-4x/day, or evidence of daytime voiding interval < 1 hour, or waking to void 5 or more x/night

Evaluation of UTI (claimed as chronic cystitis)

- Notice that for UTI conditions, VA switches back & forth between
 - Urinary Frequency criteria and
 - UTI criteria
 - VA can switch back & forth between
 - Urinary Leakage
 - Urinary Frequency
 - Obstructed Voiding

Use whatever gives the highest rating

Evaluation of UTI (claimed as chronic cystitis)

- Note that lay evidence very important in Urinary Frequency & Urinary Leakage rating criteria
- Evidence of how often vet urinates and/or how often vet changes absorbent materials is important
- Lay evidence can make a difference in these cases

Evaluation of Kidney Disease

- Chronic kidney disease reported to develop in 20 to 40% of patients with diabetes
- Since there are a lot of veteran SC for type 2 diabetes, let's review sample case involving rating kidney disease

Evaluation after Kidney Transplant

- Vet had kidney transplant in 9/04—rated 100% for transplant until 12/05
- Vet rated 30% disabled from 12/05 under DC 7531 for kidney transplant
- Under DC 7531, residuals of kidney transplant are evaluated as 100% following transplant surgery & after rated on basis of renal dysfunction w/ minimum rating of 30%

Evaluation after Kidney Transplant

- 100% is assigned effective date of admission for transplant surgery & continues w/ mandatory VA exam 1 yr. following hospital discharge
- So, question is whether vet deserves rating excess of 30%

Evaluation after Kidney Transplant

- Albumin 3.9 (abnormal is >15)
- Creatine 1.1 (normal is $<0.6 - 1.2$)
- BUN 24 (10-20 normal in adult males)
- Dr. said renal function stable

Evaluation after Kidney Transplant

- In order to get to 60% vet needs either:
- constant albuminuria w/ some swelling
- OR
- Definite decrease in kidney function
- OR
- Hypertension at least 40% under DC 7101 (diastolic pressure predominantly 120 or more)

Evaluation after Kidney Transplant

- B/c he did not meet any of the separate criteria for a 60% he was denied an increase to 60%

Evaluation after Kidney Transplant

- Things to watch out for:
- Sometimes doctor may say that vet's renal function is stable even when vet has albuminuria and some edema
- In these cases VA may deny a 60% b/c dr. said that condition is stable
- That is error—there are 3 alternative ways to get 60% and if vet meets just one he/she is entitled to 60%

Back/Nerve Conditions May Cause Urinary Problems

- If a vet is SC for a condition such as severe herniated disc or cauda equina syndrome, he/she may have incontinence problems
- Get dr. to include that in list of symptoms and have vet rated under the Urine Leakage/incontinence criteria in 4.115a.
- Required wearing of absorbent materials changed 2-4x/day = 40%

More SMC for Genitourinary Conditions

- As noted earlier, VA should award SMC for loss of use of a creative organ if **loss of erectile power is shown, with or without penile deformity**
- Vets can also get SMC for these other Genitourinary Conditions:
- acquired absence of one or both testicles (other than undescended testicles) OR
- or other creative organ OR
- Loss of use of one testicle

More SMC for Genitourinary Conditions

- LOU of one testicle will be established when exam finds:
 - diameter of affected testicle reduced to $\frac{1}{3}$ corresponding diameter of paired normal testicle, OR
 - diameter of affected testicle reduced to $\frac{1}{2}$ or less of corresponding normal testicle AND affected testicle is considerably harder or softer than corresponding normal testicle; OR
 - biopsy recommended by a board including a genitourologist & accepted by vet, establishes absence of spermatozoa

More SMC for Genitourinary Conditions

- Can get SMC when loss or LOU results from trauma or operations in service to relieve other conditions
- No SMC for Loss or LOU due to elective operation after service unless operation required to correct specific injury caused by earlier in-service operation
- operation not elective where advised on sound medical judgment to relieve condition or prevent possible future consequences

More SMC for Genitourinary Conditions

- Atrophy from mumps followed by orchitis in service is SC
- If exam > 6 months after orchitis shows normal genitourinary system, that may prove that atrophy not related to service
- If mumps not followed by orchitis in service (even if there is later atrophy)--no SMC for LOU of creative organ

Rating Gynecologic Conditions

- Not Ratable Conditions:
 - “natural” menopause
 - amenorrhea (absence of monthly period--when developmental defect or abnormality)
 - Pregnancy and childbirth

Rating Gynecologic Conditions

- Yes—these are Ratable Conditions:
 - Chronic residuals of medical/surgical complications of pregnancy may be SC (if related to or developing in service)

Rating Gynecologic Conditions

- Many gynecologic conditions are evaluated based on criteria listed in DC 7615
- DC 7615 is based on how well vet responds to treatment:
 - 30% symptoms not controlled by continuous treatment
 - 10% for symptoms that require continuous treatment
 - 0% symptoms don't require treatment

SMC for Gynecologic Conditions- Loss of Breast

- veterans entitled to SMC if have anatomical loss of 1 or both breasts as result of service or SC disability
- Includes loss by mastectomy (incl. radical mastectomy, modified radical mastectomy, simple (total) mastectomy)
- Doesn't include partial mastectomy, lumpectomy, tylectomy, segmentectomy, quadrantectomy

SMC for Gynecologic Conditions- Ovaries

- Can get SMC for acquired absence of one or both ovaries

Gynecologic Conditions

- Ovaries are treated somewhat like testis
- Compare:
- DC 7523 & 7524 (testis atrophy & removal of testis) to
- DC 7619 & 7620 (atrophy & removal of ovary)
- Big difference--vet gets 100% for 3 mos. after removal of an ovary
- Removal of Testis—no required 100% for 3 mos.

Definitions of Genitourinary & Gynecologic Terms

- Definitions are key to understanding the rating schedule

Key Definitions

- Renal – pertaining to the kidneys
- Dialysis – treatment used primarily to provide an artificial replacement for lost kidney function in people with renal failure

Albuminuria

- Albuminuria – presence of proteins in the urine
- Albumin – a plasma protein

BUN & Creatinine

- BUN – blood urea nitrogen--an indirect measure of kidney & liver function— measures amt. of urea nitrogen in blood (Urea is formed in liver as end product of protein metabolism & digestion)
- Creatinine – substance excreted in urine; a diagnostic indicator of kidney function

Casts

- formed in kidney tubules & made from protein, blood cells & debris
- Red blood cell casts usually mean damage to kidney capillaries or tubules
- Granular casts means dead tissue from kidney tubules (damage from lack of oxygen) (mentioned in the 30% criteria)

Presence or absence of casts can be determined from urine testing

Hyaline & Edema

- Hyaline casts – glassy and transparent (mentioned in 30% criteria)
- Edema - presence of abnormally large amounts of fluid in tissue

Nephritis

- Inflammation of the nephrons in kidneys.
- Nephrons are structural unit of kidney and eliminate wastes from body, regulate blood volume and blood pressure, control levels of electrolytes and metabolites, and regulate blood pH
- Usually caused by infections, toxins and auto-immune diseases

Pyelonephritis

- Ascending urinary tract infection that has reached the pelvis of the kidney
- Usually caused by bowel organisms that enter the urinary tract such as *E. coli*
- Symptoms include painful urination, abdominal pain and tenderness of the bladder area and the side of the involved kidney, fever and vomiting

Nephrosclerosis

- Hardening of the kidney usually due to disease of the blood vessels in it from thickening and hardening of the walls of arteries and chronic high blood pressure

Nephrolithiasis

- Process of forming kidney stones
- Kidney stones form when urine contains too much of certain substances - substances create small crystals that become stones

Hydronephrosis

- Swelling of one kidney due to a backup of urine
- Can be caused by backflow of urine from bladder to kidney and kidney stones
- Symptoms include tenderness in the kidney area, nausea and vomiting, urinary tract infections, and painful urination

Renal Colic—Severe Symptoms from Kidney Stones

- Renal colic describes common severe symptoms usually assoc. w/ kidney stone obstructing ureter
- Vet may have
 - unpredictable onset of severe pain
 - beginning in back and radiating to groin
 - May have nausea & vomiting

Pyonephrosis

- Infection of the kidney and renal collecting system
- Requires drainage of the urinary tract
- Caused by kidney stones and pyelonephritis

Ureterolithiasis

- Stones in the urinary tract
- Similar to nephrolithiasis, but stones are in urinary tract rather than kidney
- Caused if kidney(s), bladder or urinal tracts get inflamed and urine contains too much of certain substances

Epididymo-orchitis

- Swelling and inflammation of one or both of the testicles
- Caused by infections of prostate gland or lower urinary tract that spread to epididymis and testicles
- Symptoms include swelling, painful urination, fever and blood in urine

Cystic Diseases of the Kidney

- Kidney cyst is fluid-filled sac stemming from enlargement of any part of the kidney
- Some cysts are the primary abnormality, but some can accompany other kidney problems

Atherosclerotic Renal Disease

- Atherosclerosis is common disorder of arteries - occurs when fat, cholesterol, and other substances build up in walls of arteries and form plaque
- Cholesterol crystals break off from plaque lining arteries
- Crystals move into blood stream and get stuck in tiny blood vessels
- Stuck crystals cause intense swelling and pain that can harm kidney or other parts of the body

Definitions—Gynecologic & Breast Conditions

Amenorrhea

- Absence of a menstrual period in a woman of reproductive age
- Often caused by hormonal disturbances from the hypothalamus and the pituitary gland, from premature menopause or implanted birth control scar formation

Vulvovaginitis

- Inflammation of the vulva and vagina
- Caused by bacteria, yeasts, viruses, and other parasites

Introitus

- Introitus of the vagina is the opening to the vagina

Rectocele

- Tear in the rectovaginal septum (normally a tough, fibrous, sheet-like divider between the rectum and vagina)
- Rectal tissue bulges through this tear and into the vagina as a hernia
- Two main causes of a tear: childbirth, and hysterectomy

Cystocele

- Medical condition that occurs when the tough fibrous wall between a woman's bladder and her vagina is torn by childbirth, allowing the bladder to herniate into the vagina
- Similar to rectocele

Rectovaginal Fistula

- Medical condition where there is fistula or abnormal connection between rectum and vagina
- If the opening between rectum and vagina is wide, will allow both flatulence and feces to escape through the vagina, leading to fecal incontinence
- Associated with recurrent urinary and vaginal infections

Urethrovaginal Fistula

- Medical condition where there is fistula or abnormal connection between urethra and vagina
- Usually caused by obstetric injury
- Fistulae in the urethra close to the bladder neck are often associated with incontinence

Radial Mastectomy

- Removal of the entire breast, underlying pectoral muscles, and regional lymph nodes up to the coracoclavicular ligament

Modified Radical Mastectomy

- Removal of the entire breast and axillary lymph nodes
- Pectoral muscles left intact

Simple (or total) Mastectomy

- Removal of all the breast tissue, nipple, and small portion of overlying skin
- Lymph nodes and muscles left intact

Wide Local Excision

- Includes partial mastectomy, lumpectomy, tylectomy, segmentectomy, and quadrantectomy
- Removal of a portion of breast tissue

Neoplasms

- Abnormal mass of tissue as a result of neoplasia
- Neoplasia is abnormal proliferation of cells
- Usually causes a lump or tumor.
- Neoplasms may be benign, pre-malignant or malignant

Endometriosis

- Gynecological medical condition in which cells appear and flourish in areas outside the uterine cavity, most commonly on the ovaries
- Symptoms include pelvic pain, chronic fatigue and fever
- Often present in women with infertility