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 8 mg%; or,
  - markedly decreased function of kidney or other organ systems, esp. cardiovascular

- 80% Persistent edema & albuminuria with BUN 40 to 80 mg%;
  or, creatinine 4 to 8 mg%; 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”
  - 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, you are 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
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
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
LOU of one testicle will be established when exam finds:

- diameter of affected testicle reduced to 1/3 corresponding diameter of paired normal testicle, OR
- diameter of affected testicle reduced to 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
**Yes**—these are Ratable Conditions:

- Chronic residuals of medical/surgical complications of pregnancy may be SC (if related to or developing in service)
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
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

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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 a 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 a 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.
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 Radial 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 tumo.
- 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