Letter to the Editor

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Comment on the Letter by J. M. Ferro and A. N. Pinto on

Sexual Activity Is a Common Precipitant of Subarachnoid Hemorrhage

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We read with interest the letter by Ferro and Pinto concerning our paper on aneurysmal subarachnoid hemorrhage [1]. We were well aware of the very low incidence of sexual activity as an event preceding aneurysmal rupture in our report compared with that from Western countries, although we did not discuss it in our paper. There was only one such patient in our series, who was listed in the category of 'others'. We do not deny the possibility that there might have been some more patients. Although it is very unlikely, if the 22 patients who reported that they had been sleeping or taking a rest were all engaged in sexual activity immediately before the onset of subarachnoid hemorrhage, this would make a total of 23 patients, 5.4%. This figure is still lower than the 11 % mentioned by Ferro and Pinto.

We looked into the medical records of another 81 patients with ruptured aneurysm in the 2 years following our published series, from April 1991 to March 1993, and found 3 patients reporting sexual activity before the hemorrhage, an incidence of 3.7%. This increase from 1 in 425 patients, 0.2%, in a short period may be explained by inappropriate history taking. In this respect we agree with Ferro and Pinto.

Quite a large proportion of our patients had an agricultural background. The results from an urban area might be different from ours, and closer to those from Western countries. We do not know. The figure at issue will perhaps increase in the years to come due to a changing life-style, and changing culture, if sexual behavior is related to culture as suggested.

Reference

Matsuda M, Ohashi M, Shiino A, Matsumura K, Handa J: Circumstances precipitating aneurysmal subarachnoid hemorrhage. Cerebrovasc Dis 1993;3:285-288.