Introductory Remarks

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Compensated benign prostatic hyperplasia (BPH) does not impair organs or body systems, and is certainly not life-threatening. However, it does produce symptoms and disturbances that reduce quality of life to a more or less evident and tolerable degree.

The objective of the QUIBUS epidemiological study was to assess the clinical manifestations of BPH in Italian patients by means of a series of investigations, focusing on identification of the symptoms that really cause discomfort and even disability.

As the investigation included both the disorder itself and symptoms, it was interesting to see to what extent Italian urologists verify that symptoms really are associated with i.e. caused by prostate enlargement and bladder outlet obstruction. Co-morbidity and other risk factors were taken into account.

The tolerability of the various symptoms is closely associated with quality of life. The QUIBUS study provided reliable answers, based on a 34-item questionnaire, which was reasonably well accepted by patients. Even the issue of sexual dysfunction was addressed.

Finally, the collection of uroflowmetry data tackled the problem and controversies related to the method itself, which has the advantage of being noninvasive, but does not permit direct verification of bladder outlet obstruction. The study provided data on maximum urinary flow related to age and prostate volume, as well as on the relationship between uroflowmetric data and symptoms ascribable to emptying and filling disorders. Notwithstanding the broad range of answers, the study shows that non-invasive parameters alone are not reliable indices of bladder outlet obstruction, but that they become reliable when IPSS, peak flow and prostate volume are all considered together.

Overall, I believe that the QUIBUS study has achieved its objective, namely the epidemiological evaluation of changes in quality of life, related to demographic, social and clinical factors, in a large number of Italian patients presenting with symptoms compatible with benign prostatic hyperplasia.

The results are very interesting and I hope that the future will see the achievement of many projects of this kind.