

# The prevalence of stress urinary incontinence in female senior football players in the Lisbon area

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**INTRODUCTION:** Nowadays, the number of female football players (high impact sports) in Portugal, has been increasing (1). It is known that women who participate in repetitive and high impact sports present a higher risk of urinary incontinence. This way, Stress Urinary Incontinence (SUI) becomes an obstacle when associated with the practice of regular exercise and physical activities in women (2,3,4).

**PURPOSE OF STUDY:** The aim of this study was to verify SUI prevalence in senior female football players in football clubs in Great Lisbon area.

**MATERIAL AND METHODS:** This study was a quantitative descriptive observational study. The prevalence of SUI was assessed with two instruments validated to Portuguese: King's Health Questionnaire (KHQ) and International Consultation on Incontinence Questionnaire-Short Form (ICIQ-SF). KHQ measures the impact of urinary incontinence on the state of health and quality life, with  $\alpha = 0,564$  and ICIQ-SF assesses urine loss and how dysfunctions affect quality of life. It was a convenience sample. From a population of 1047 football players, 61 fulfilled the inclusion criteria. Which were: nulliparous women, age between 18 and 40 years, 1 year of football experience, training duration was  $\geq 60$  minutes and exclusion criteria was women with previous urogynecology surgery.

**STATISTICAL ANALYSIS:** The collected data was analyzed with Microsoft Excel and Statistical Program for the Social Science (SPSS) version 25.0 with  $p < 0,05$  statistically significant.

**RESULTS:** The results of this study showed that 36.1% of female football players lost urine (figure 1). 22 athletes lost urine, mostly 77.3% once a week (figure 2) and the most common cause with 40.9% was during the practice of football sport (figure 3).

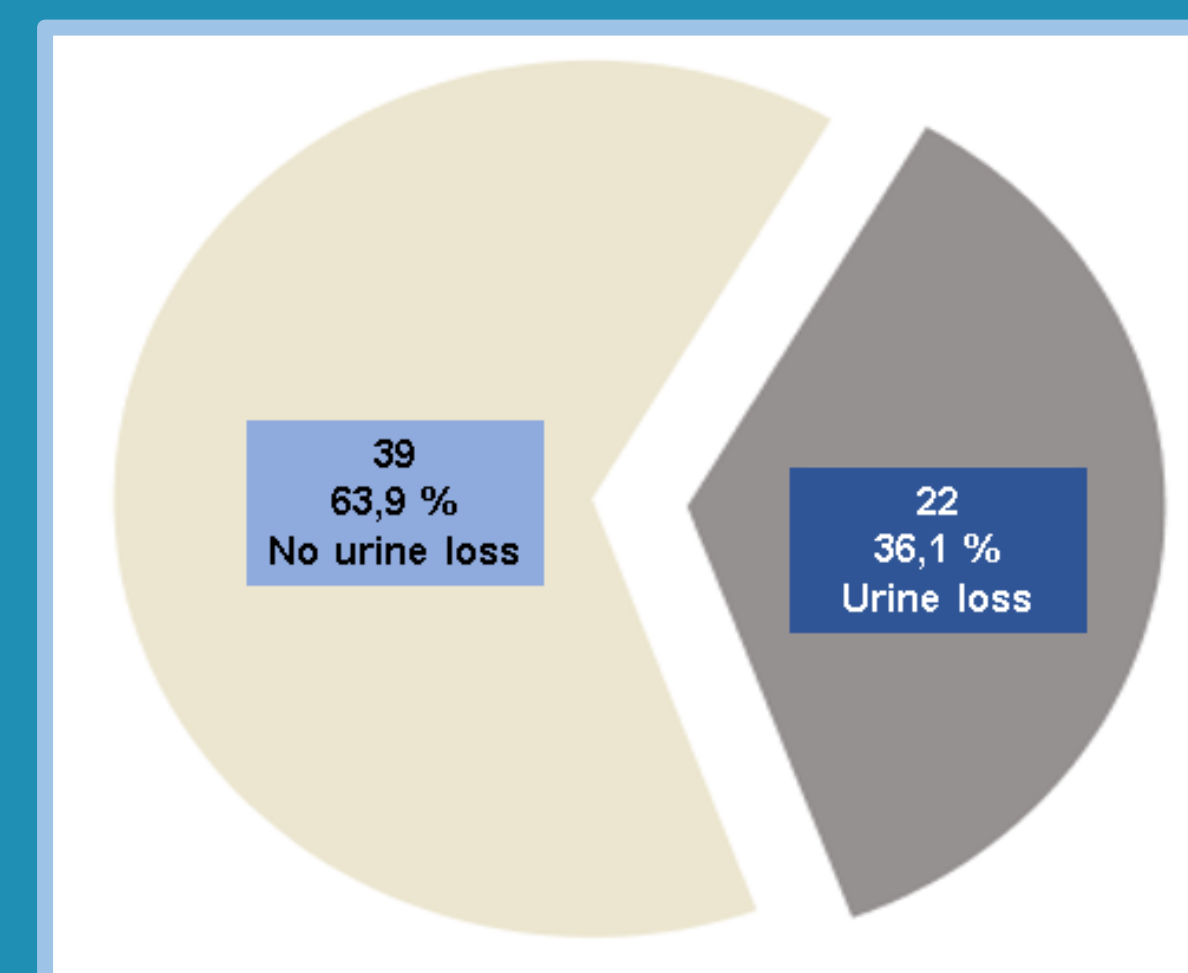


Figure 1: Urine loss. Absolute and relative frequency distribution.

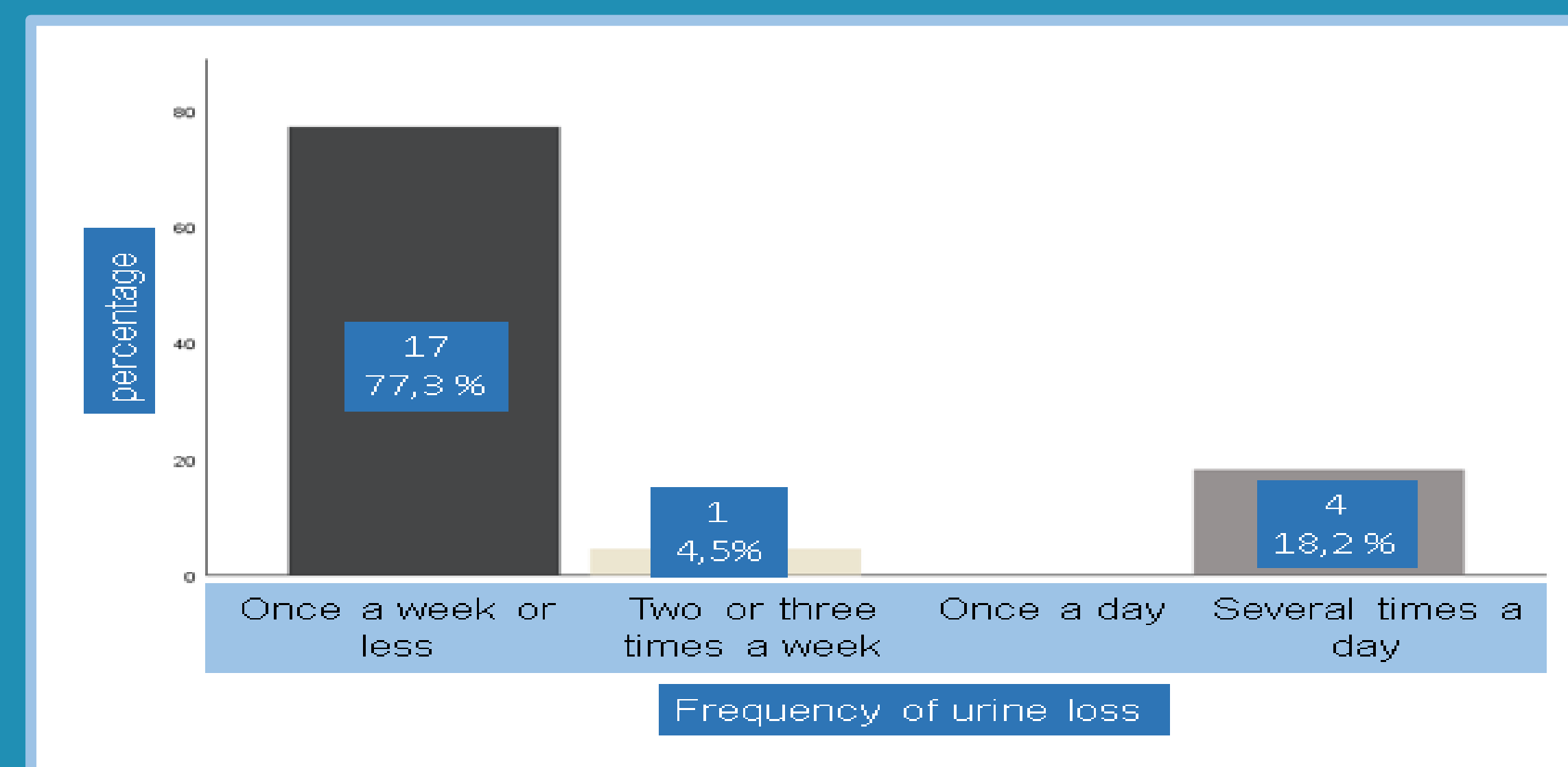


Figure 2: Frequency of urine loss. Absolute and relative frequency distribution

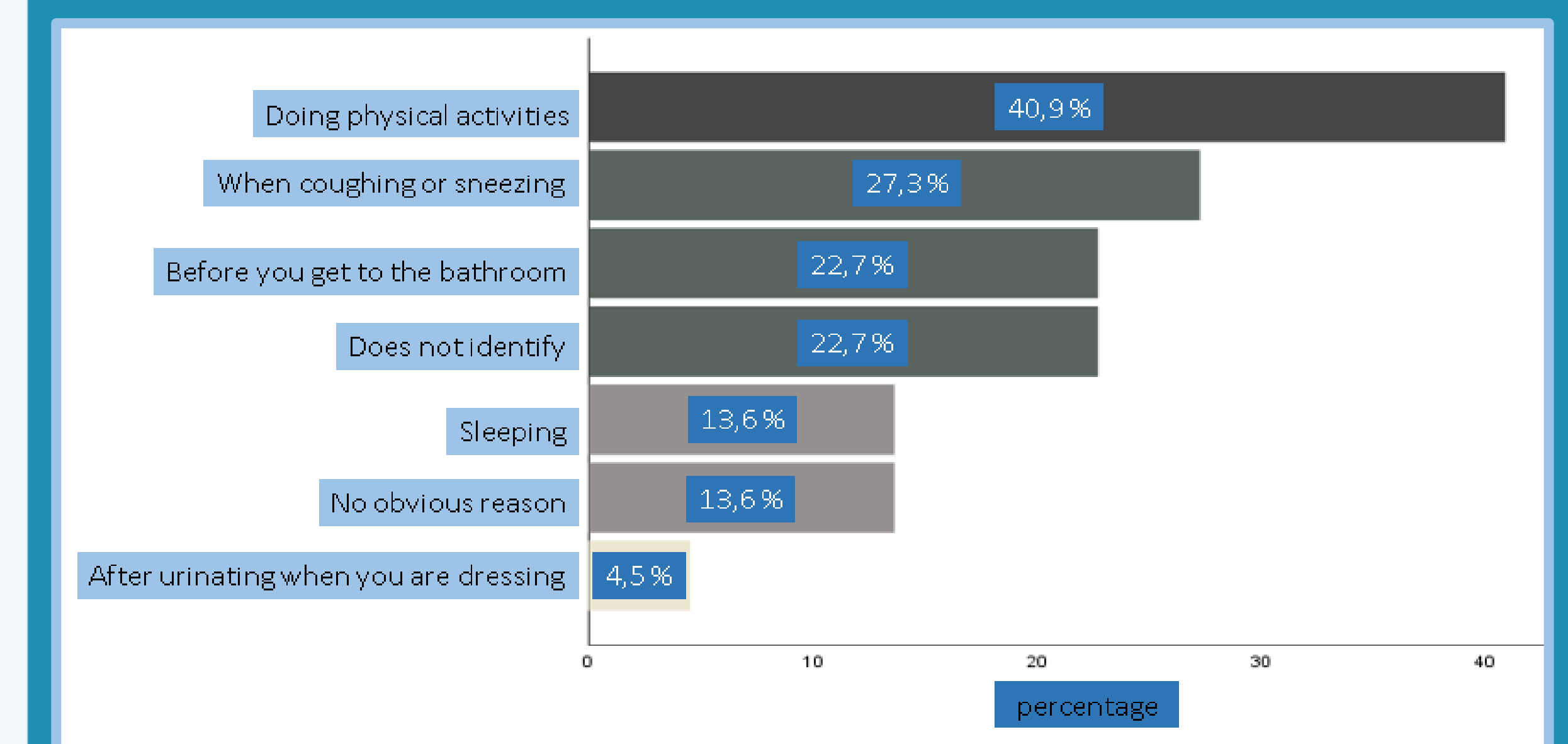


Figure 3: Context of urine loss. Absolute and relative frequency distribution

**DISCUSSION:** There is great variability regarding the prevalence of SUI in women's football player in the results in the literature (5,6,7,8). It was not possible, according to the global analysis of the variables, to find any statistically significant difference with the variables of football characterization. However, the results obtained seem to point to a prevalence of SUI of 57.1% in the extreme left and 66.7% in the extreme right field position.

**CONCLUSIONS:** SUI seems to restrict the performance of female football players. Therefore, it is very important that the physiotherapist has the role to create an alert for sports agents, medical departments and technical staff of women's football clubs.

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