

REVIEW OF UROLOGIC CHRONIC PELVIC PAIN SYNDROME THERAPEUTIC APPROACHES AND TRANSLATIONAL STUDIES

Salman Ashraf, Allison Xie, Anna Malykhina

University of Colorado, Department of Surgery – Urology, Aurora, CO

Introduction: Urologic Chronic Pelvic Pain Syndrome (UCPPS) is a complex disorder characterized by chronic pain originating in the pelvic organs, and significantly impacts quality of life in affected patients. The syndrome occurs in both females and males with an estimated prevalence of up to 26.6% across the world (Tam, Loeb, Grajower, Kim, & Weissbart, 2018). The pathophysiological mechanisms underlying UCPPS are not well understood making it difficult to develop effective therapeutic approaches

Background: The diagnosis of UCPPS is primarily based on the exclusion of other potential causes of chronic pelvic pain, and includes a thorough physical and medical history examination, followed by appropriate selection of first- and second-line therapies. Currently available treatment options include both pharmaceutical and non-pharmaceutical interventions. Treating the symptoms of the condition to improve the quality of life of patients is at the forefront.

Methods: A comprehensive overview of the published clinical and translational studies summarizing UCPPS pathological mechanisms, treatment options and their efficacies was performed using PubMed.

Results: An accurate diagnosis of UCPPS is critical in order to reduce patient frustration associated with visiting multiple physicians before receiving the final diagnosis. Physicians can utilize the plethora of existing symptoms that are associated with UCPPS alongside a thorough physical examination, history, imaging techniques, and labs in order to reach an accurate diagnosis. First-line treatments for UCPPS can be made more reproducible based off existing data regarding the efficacy of non-pharmaceutical and pharmaceutical interventions.

Conclusion: UCPPS is a chronic pelvic pain functional disorder complicated by co-morbid conditions, and is characterized by a plethora of symptoms. If an accurate diagnosis of UCPPS is to be reached, it is imperative that the physicians from multiple disciplines (urologists, urogynecologists, psychologists) work together with the patient to understand and differentiate UCPPS from other conditions using a patient interview, imaging, and lab tests. Timely diagnosis of UCPPS followed by appropriate first-line treatments can significantly improve quality of life in affected patients.