

MATERIALS AND METHODS

In this study, male patients over 20 years old in different urological departments and clinics were requested to fill out a questionnaire. Involved in the interview were 35 urological physicians and 33 medical practitioners. Totally, 6385 copies of the questionnaire were distributed, and 6278 copies were recovered. The subjects of the study were those who had had sexual intercourse in the previous 6 months and 5939 copies (94.6%) of the questionnaire had all of the questions filled in. For the age distribution of these 5939 patients, 5% were aged from 21 to 30, 15% from 31 to 40, 30% from 41 to 50, 22% from 51 to 60, 19% from 61 to 70, 8% from 71 to 80, and 1% over 80 years (Fig. 1).

The Chinese version of the International Index of Erectile Function (IIEF), which was approved by the original author, was used in the study. There are 15 questions in the original IIEF. In this study, 5 questions (questions 2, 3, 5, 7, and 15 from the original version) were used with permission to evaluate erectile function, with each question scored from 0 to 5 (Table 1). According to the original classification of erectile dysfunction by the 5-item version of the IIEF,² the 5 scores are added together: 22-25 is regarded as normal, 12-21 as slight erectile disorder, 8-11 as medium erectile disorder, and 5-7 as severe erectile disorder. The sum was used to evaluate the erectile function of 5939 patients, 56% of whom were from clinics and

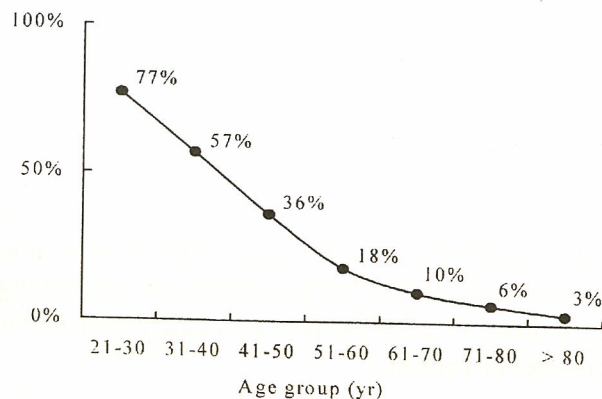


Fig. 1. Age distribution of the 5939 urological patients in this study.

44% of whom were from hospitals.

We used Chi-square and ANOVA tests for determining the statistical significance of erectile function changes among the different age groups. For analysis of the percentage of medium and severe erectile dysfunction among the different age groups, a linear regression test was used to detect the cutoff for a remarkable decline in function.

RESULTS

As evaluated by the IIEF-5 questionnaire, 29% of patients scored 22 to 25 (normal), 57% scored 12 to 21 (slight erectile dysfunction), 10% scored 8 to 11 (medium erectile dysfunction), and 4% scored 5-7 (severe erectile dysfunction). In short, 71% of all patients suffered from erectile dysfunction (Table 2). In terms of the 2 sources of patients, 24% of hospital patients were normal, 58% had slight erectile dysfunction, 12% had medium erectile dysfunction and 6% had severe erectile dysfunction. Among patients from clinics, 33% were normal, 55% had slight erectile dysfunction, 9% had medium erectile dysfunction, and 3% had severe erectile dysfunction.

In terms of the age of patients suffering from erectile dysfunction, 77% of the patients aged from 21 to 30 were normal, while only 21% in this age group suffered from slight erectile dysfunction. Fifty-seven percent of patients aged 31 to 40 years were normal, while 41% in this age group suffered from slight erectile dysfunction. Among patients aged 41 to 50 years, the percentage that were normal was greatly reduced to less than half, that is, 36% of patients were normal, while 57% suffered from slight erectile dysfunction, and 6% suffered from medium erectile dysfunction. Among patients aged 51 to 60 years, only 18% were normal, while 70% suffered from slight erectile dysfunction. Among patients aged 61 to 70 years, only 10% were normal, while 63% suffered from slight erectile dysfunction, 19% from medium erectile dysfunction, and 8% from severe erectile dysfunction. Among patients aged 71 to 80 years, the interview reveals that only 6% were normal, while 49% suffered from slight erectile dysfunction, 27% from medium