PSYCHOLOGICAL STRESS AND SEMEN QUALITY AMONG MEN UNDERGOING INTRAUTERINE INSEMINATION

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To test the hypothesis that psychological stress can influence the semen quality in men undergoing intrauterine insemination. Forty-two women who underwent an intrauterine insemination from September 2002 to April 2004 were included in this prospective study. A regular semen analysis was performed in all cases as part of our routine male infertility evaluation (T1). The result of this analysis was compared with the semen sample collected on the day of the intrauterine insemination procedure (T2). The mean difference between semen analysis at T1 and T2 was 3.1±0.8 months. The mean T1 sperm concentration ± standard deviation was 52.45 ± 32.65 and 57.34 ± 39.54 (r = 0.45; p = 0.79) for T2. Of the 42 patients, sperm concentration increased in 8, no change in 12 and 22 showed decreased sperm count. The mean T1 sperm motility ± standard deviation was 62.42 ± 17.23 and 57.32 ± 21.52 (r = 0.87; p = 0.2) for T2. Of the 42 patients, sperm motility increased in 19, no change in 12 and 11 had decreased motility. The mean T1 normal sperm morphology according to World Health Organization ± standard deviation was 22.4 ± 8.35 and 21.1 ± 7.45 (r = 0.91; p = 0.88) for T2. Of the 42 patients, normal sperm morphology increased in 3, no change in 34 and 5 had decreased sperm morphology. This study provides no evidence of a significant decline in semen quality or an inverse correlation between semen quality and psychological stress of patients undergoing intrauterine insemination.