SESSIONE 12 REVISIONE DEL PERCORSO DIAGNOSTICO PER LE VULVOVAGINITI

EPIDEMIOLOGICAL ASPECTS OF BACTERIAL VAGINOSIS AND VAGINITIS

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Bacterial vaginosis (BV) is an alteration of the vaginal microenvironment characterized by a strong reduction or disappearance of lactobacilli and overgrowth of obligate anaerobic bacteria and Gardnerella vaginalis. Vaginitis is an inflammatory condition of the vagina and the most frequent causative agents are Candida spp. and Trichomonas vaginalis. During the last years also another vaginal dysbiosis, called aerobic vaginitis, characterized by variable degrees of inflammation and the presence of commensal aerobic microorganisms of intestinal origin, has been described. The prevalence and risk factors for both BV and vaginitis will be reviewed. Bacterial vaginosis prevalence was found to vary considerably among countries worldwide, often in relation to differences among sample sizes, frequently also not representative of the general population and lack of standardization of the applied methods. The main risk factors associated with BV found in studies and meta-analyses are multiple sexual partners and vaginal douching, whereas condom use and hormonal contraception have been found to be linked to a reduced risk. Some of this evidence supports the hypothesis that BV is strongly associated with sexual activity. With respect to Candida vaginitis, main risk factors are diabetes mellitus, pregnancy, immunosuppression, hormone replacement therapy and antimicrobial therapy. As for BV, prevalence of Candida vaginitis varies according to geographical area and population samples considered. Linked to high-risk sexual behavior, trichomoniasis is one of the most prevalent sexually transmitted diseases (STDs) worldwide, whose prevalence has extreme variations according with the population studied, being very high in settings like correctional facilities and STD clinics. Aerobic vaginitis is in general less prevalent of BV, although often undiagnosed and its associated risk factors seem similar to those for BV. Bacterial vaginosis and trichomoniasis has been associated to an increased risk of obstetric complications and of acquisition and transmission of STDs, including human immunodeficiency virus. Regarding local epidemiology of BV and vaginitis in SS. Antonio e Biagio e C. Arrigo Hospital's catchment area, during the period 2015-2019, statistically significant variations of prevalence of both BV and Candida vaginitis have been found.