What kind of imaging studies and imaging based therapies are done by the urologist?


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Results: 100 (77%) of 129 patients with prostate cancer were surgically treated by the urologist himself. However, other specialties are involved in the management of urological patients. Many of the currently available imaging studies and imaging based therapies can be performed by the urologist himself. However, other specialties are also often involved. The European Society of Urological Imaging (ESUI) initiated a survey, investigating what kind of exams and interventions are done by urologists.

Materials and Methods: In Spring 2009, an invitation to participate in an internet-based survey was sent by e-mail to all EAU members. The survey consisted of a short questionnaire including 21 questions in 7 sub domains. The questionnaire investigated which specialty was in charge of the following imaging studies in urological patients: ultrasound, conventional X-ray, CT scan, MRI and interventional radiology, such as nephrostomy and kidney or prostate biopsy. Moreover, imaging based therapies were also investigated, such as focal therapy of the kidney and the prostate. Exams and interventions could either be performed by the urologist or other specialties (radiology, surgery, internal medicine).

Results: Over all, 476 replies were received, with 90% coming from public hospitals. The percentage of urologists doing ultrasound exams of the kidney was 66%, of the bladder 73%, of the testicle 61% and of the prostate 89%. The urologist performed conventional X-Ray and intravenous urograms in 17% and 20%, respectively. CT scan and MRI were performed by urologists in 9% and 1%, respectively. Urologists were in charge of interventional radiology, such as nephrostomies in 74%, kidney biopsy in 46% and prostate biopsy in 57%. Focal therapy of the kidney by radiofrequency was done by the urologist in 57% and by cryotherapy in 72%. Focal therapy of the prostate by HIFU was done by the urologist 83% and by cryotherapy in 81%.

Conclusions: Not all urologists perform ultrasound exams of all urological organs, with exception of the prostate, where 90% of the exams are done by the urologist. Conventional X-Ray, CT and MRI are the domain of other specialties. With exception of the prostate, the urologist is only in 2/3 of the cases involved in imaging based therapies. Urologist should become more active in this field, as they are the most appropriate actor in the treatment of urological pathologies.