



Fig 1. Percentage of respondents experiencing sexual harassment by type of behavior. Percentages of each event type that involved patients, supervising attending physicians or other faculty members, fellow residents, and other health care workers are displayed.

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How to improve the clinical experience for dermatology patients requiring a genital examination: A randomized trial of deodorizing wipes versus standard of care



To the Editor: Although assessing patient satisfaction is an important practice in health care, patient satisfaction with genital examinations has been investigated in few studies. Despite its prevalence, this examination is associated with feelings of embarrassment and discomfort.¹ In this study, we aimed to determine whether offering patients a deodorizing wipe before a dermatologically focused genital examination would improve patient satisfaction.

This cross-sectional pilot study was conducted with 123 adult patients visiting dermatology clinics during July 2017–November 2018 who provided verbal consent. Patients whose chief complaint related to a dermatologic condition on their genitals were included in this study. Data was collected through an anonymous survey provided in English or Spanish. This study was approved by the Boston University institutional review board.

Consecutive patients were randomized 1-to-1 into experimental and control groups. All participants received a drape, examination gown, evaluation, and treatment and were seen by a resident physician blinded to the patient's assigned group. Patients in the experimental group were additionally offered a Nice 'n Clean scented baby wipe (\$9.89 for a 432-count bulk pack) by the attending physician before changing into the examination gown. After their appointment, participants completed the survey, which included questions on demographics, the Patient Satisfaction Questionnaire 18 (a validated standardized tool), and 3 statements specific to the genital examination.² Statistical analysis was performed by using SAS software (SAS Institute Inc, Cary, NC). Because of the nonnormal distribution of participant responses, the descriptive statistics medians and interquartile ranges were reported.

The participants were 65.9% male, and their age range was 24–51 years. Non-Hispanic white persons comprised 47.2% of the group, and 67.5% had a high school education or less (Supplemental 1; available at <https://data.mendeley.com/datasets/rt7ktpbkv8/1#file-d2883265-6277-4b3a-9c66-1f5f57229b74>). The most common diagnosis was condyloma acuminatum.

Overall, satisfaction scores were higher among the experimental group (Tables I and II). Participants in the experimental group reported significantly higher scores in multiple areas, including general satisfaction ($P < .001$), communication ($P < .001$), time spent with doctor ($P < .001$), and interpersonal

Table I. Responses of intervention and control group to Patient Satisfaction Questionnaire 18 and genital examination questions by level of agreement

Question	No. (%) patients		P value
	Intervention, n = 62	Control, n = 61	
Doctors are good about explaining the reason for medical tests.			.003
Strongly agree	55 (88.7)	35 (58.3)	
Agree	7 (11.3)	21 (35.0)	
Neutral	0 (0)	2 (3.3)	
Disagree	0 (0)	1 (1.7)	
Strongly disagree	0 (0)	1 (1.7)	
Missing	0	1	
I think my doctor's office has everything needed to provide complete medical care.			<.001
Strongly agree	58 (93.5)	28 (48.3)	
Agree	4 (6.5)	26 (44.8)	
Neutral	0 (0)	2 (3.4)	
Disagree	0 (0)	0 (0)	
Strongly disagree	0 (0)	2 (3.4)	
Missing	0	3	
The medical care I have been receiving is just about perfect.			<.001
Strongly agree	55 (88.7)	31 (52.5)	
Agree	7 (11.3)	24 (40.7)	
Neutral	0 (0)	1 (1.7)	
Disagree	0 (0)	0 (0)	
Strongly disagree	0 (0)	3 (5.1)	
Missing	0	2	
I was satisfied with the comfort and privacy of the examination room.			<.001
Strongly agree	59 (95.2)	27 (45.0)	
Agree	3 (4.8)	30 (50.0)	
Neutral	0 (0)	0 (0)	
Disagree	0 (0)	0 (0)	
Strongly disagree	0 (0)	3 (5.0)	
Missing		1	
Sometimes doctors make me wonder if their diagnosis is correct.			.068
Strongly agree	0 (0)	4 (6.8)	
Agree	0 (0)	3 (5.1)	
Neutral	1 (1.6)	0 (0)	
Disagree	4 (6.5)	4 (6.8)	
Strongly disagree	57 (91.9)	48 (81.4)	
Missing	0	2	
I feel confident I can get the medical care I need without being set back financially.			.169
Strongly agree	2 (3.2)	7 (11.7)	
Agree	5 (8.1)	3 (5.0)	
Neutral	48 (77.4)	39 (65.0)	
Disagree	7 (11.3)	9 (15.0)	
Strongly disagree	0 (0)	2 (3.3)	
Missing	0	1	
When I go for medical care, they are careful to check everything when treating and examining me.			<.001
Strongly agree	60 (96.8)	26 (43.3)	
Agree	2 (3.2)	30 (50.0)	
Neutral	0 (0)	2 (3.3)	
Disagree	0 (0)	0 (0)	
Strongly disagree	0 (0)	2 (3.3)	
Missing	0	1	

Continued

Table I. Cont'd

Question	No. (%) patients		P value
	Intervention, n = 62	Control, n = 61	
I felt relaxed and comfortable during my genital exam.			<.001
Strongly agree	55 (88.7)	29 (48.3)	
Agree	7 (11.3)	26 (43.3)	
Neutral	0 (0)	2 (3.3)	
Disagree	0 (0)	1 (1.7)	
Strongly disagree	0 (0)	2 (3.3)	
Missing	0	1	
I have to pay for more of my medical care than I can afford.			.162
Strongly agree	0 (0)	2 (3.4)	
Agree	1 (1.6)	3 (5.1)	
Neutral	18 (29.0)	11 (18.6)	
Disagree	42 (67.7)	39 (66.1)	
Strongly disagree	1 (1.6)	4 (6.8)	
Missing	0	2	
I have easy access to the medical specialists I need.			.044
Strongly agree	1 (1.6)	6 (10.0)	
Agree	32 (51.6)	19 (31.7)	
Neutral	25 (40.3)	25 (41.7)	
Disagree	4 (6.5)	9 (15.0)	
Strongly disagree	0 (0)	1 (1.7)	
Missing	0	1	
Where I get medical care, people have to wait too long for emergency treatment.			.236
Strongly agree	0 (0)	2 (3.3)	
Agree	5 (8.1)	3 (5.0)	
Neutral	46 (74.2)	42 (70.0)	
Disagree	10 (16.1)	8 (13.3)	
Strongly disagree	1 (1.6)	5 (8.3)	
Missing	0	1	
Doctors act too businesslike and impersonal toward me.			.438
Strongly agree	0 (0)	1 (1.7)	
Agree	1 (1.6)	2 (3.4)	
Neutral	0 (0)	2 (3.4)	
Disagree	7 (11.3)	6 (10.3)	
Strongly disagree	54 (87.1)	47 (81.0)	
Missing	0	3	
I was satisfied with my genital exam.			<.001
Strongly agree	55 (88.7)	22 (37.3)	
Agree	7 (11.3)	34 (57.6)	
Neutral	0 (0)	1 (1.7)	
Disagree	0 (0)	0 (0)	
Strongly disagree	0 (0)	2 (3.4)	
Missing	0	2	
My doctors treat me in a very friendly and courteous manner.			.012
Strongly agree	59 (95.2)	46 (76.7)	
Agree	3 (4.8)	13 (21.7)	
Neutral	0 (0)	0 (0)	
Disagree	0 (0)	0 (0)	
Strongly disagree	0 (0)	1 (1.7)	
Missing	0	1	
Those who provide my medical care sometimes hurry too much when they treat me.			<.001
Strongly agree	0 (0)	0 (0)	

Continued

Table I. Cont'd

Question	No. (%) patients		P value
	Intervention, n = 62	Control, n = 61	
Agree	0 (0)	3 (5.1)	
Neutral	1 (1.6)	4 (6.8)	
Disagree	2 (3.2)	27 (45.8)	
Strongly disagree	59 (95.2)	25 (42.4)	
Missing	0	2	
Doctors sometimes ignore what I tell them.			.105
Strongly agree	0 (0)	1 (1.7)	
Agree	0 (0)	1 (1.7)	
Neutral	0 (0)	3 (5.1)	
Disagree	4 (6.5)	8 (13.6)	
Strongly disagree	58 (93.5)	46 (78.0)	
Missing	0	2	
I have some doubts about the ability of doctors who treat me.			.060
Strongly agree	0 (0)	0 (0)	
Agree	0 (0)	0 (0)	
Neutral	0 (0)	3 (5.2)	
Disagree	3 (4.8)	7 (12.1)	
Strongly disagree	59 (95.2)	48 (82.8)	
Missing	0	3	
Doctors usually spend plenty of time with me.			<.001
Strongly agree	53 (85.5)	12 (20.0)	
Agree	6 (9.7)	34 (56.7)	
Neutral	3 (4.8)	13 (21.7)	
Disagree	0 (0)	0 (0)	
Strongly disagree	0 (0)	1 (1.7)	
Missing	0	1	
It is hard to get an appointment for medical care right away.			.159
Strongly agree	1 (1.6)	1 (1.7)	
Agree	3 (4.8)	2 (3.3)	
Neutral	6 (9.7)	11 (18.3)	
Disagree	14 (22.6)	22 (36.7)	
Strongly disagree	38 (61.3)	24 (40.0)	
Missing	0	1	
I am dissatisfied with some things about the medical care I receive.			.025
Strongly agree	0 (0)	3 (5.1)	
Agree	0 (0)	2 (3.4)	
Neutral	0 (0)	0 (0)	
Disagree	2 (3.2)	7 (11.9)	
Strongly disagree	60 (96.8)	47 (79.7)	
Missing	0	2	
I am able to get medical care whenever I need it.			.102
Strongly agree	38 (61.3)	27 (45.0)	
Agree	16 (25.8)	18 (30.0)	
Neutral	4 (6.5)	13 (21.7)	
Disagree	3 (4.8)	1 (1.7)	
Strongly disagree	1 (1.6)	1 (1.7)	
Missing	0	1	

Table II. Median Patient Satisfaction Questionnaire 18 scores by study group

Grouping	Median (interquartile range)/no. missing		P value
	Intervention, n = 62	Control, n = 61	
General satisfaction	5.0 (5.0-5.0)/0	4.5 (4.5-5.0)/1	<.001
Technical quality	5.0 (5.0-5.0)/0	4.8 (4.3-4.8)/1	<.001
Interpersonal manner	5.0 (5.0-5.0)/0	5.0 (4.5-5.0)/1	.003
Communication	5.0 (5.0-5.0)	4.5 (4.5-5.0)	<.001
Financial aspects	3.5 (3.0-3.5)/0	3.5 (3.0-3.5)/1	.806
Time spent with doctor	5.0 (5.0-5.0)/0	4.0 (4.0-4.5)/1	<.001
Access and convenience	4.0 (3.8-4.3)/0	3.8 (3.4-4.0)/1	.012
Overall score	4.6 (4.5-4.7)	4.3 (4.1-4.4)	<.001

manner ($P = .003$). Most patients in both groups reported positive satisfaction scores (strongly agree or agree) for the genital-specific statements. However, these were significantly higher in the experimental group ($P < .001$).

Our results suggest that by offering a deodorizing wipe we were able to increase privacy and examination satisfaction. This finding mirrors results of a prior study, in which offering a wrap skirt to increase privacy significantly improved patient experience.³ Second, offering a wipe not only increased satisfaction of the genital examination itself but also of the entire appointment. Last, this intervention improved patients' perception of time spent with the provider, a key predictor of patient satisfaction.^{4,5}

Limitations of our study include the use of a single study site and small sample size. Furthermore, determining whether patients actually used the wipes offered was not possible, making it unclear whether self-cleaning with the wipe or simply receiving the wipe as an act of kindness contributed to the improved patient satisfaction scores.

In summary, our findings suggest that the simple, low-cost intervention of offering patients a deodorized ~2-cent wipe before their genital examination has the ability to not only increase their satisfaction with the genital examination but also their overall experience.

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Acral melanoma with eccrine involvement: Comments and controversies



To the Editor: Acral lentiginous melanoma (ALM) accounts for approximately 5% of all melanomas. Its occurrence is similar across all racial and ethnic groups, peaking around the seventh decade of life. It typically occurs on the palms and soles or in and around the nail apparatus. These areas, which lack hair follicles but contain abundant eccrine sweat glands, are susceptible to developing melanoma without ultraviolet light exposure.¹