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METHODS OF URINARY INCONTINENCE IN THAI FEMALE ELDERLY. THESIS
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The purpose of this survey research was to investigate the prevalence of urinary incontinence (UI), related factors, psycho-social impacts and self-management methods of Thai elderly females aged 60 years and over living in the general community in Bangkok. Seven hundred and twenty female elderly were interviewed using epidemiological model to obtain data about their human biological and environmental factors, life-styles and the access to health-care systems for factors related to UI.

The results showed that the prevalence of UI in Thai elderly females was 28.5 %. The most common type is mixed UI, which is characterized by the presentation of both stress and urge UI simultaneously. Of the UI cases, 57.6 % were classified as severe incontinence. The psychological impacts which affected their social life were the perceptions of discomfort, low self-confidence, and social-isolation (66.8 %, 49.3 %, and 49.3 %, respectively). Most of the UI cases accepted their incontinence and the most common methods for self-management were changing their wet clothes, frequently urinating, avoiding going outside and urgency toileting. Factors that significantly related to UI were over-weight body mass index, present illness, heart disease, respiratory disease, constipation and depression.

The findings indicate that UI in Thai elderly females is a major public health problem which needs to be solved. Appropriate health education programs for the prevention and control of UI to help change people's knowledge, attitude, expectations, and management of UI are necessary for clients, families, and health care providers. It is important to set up a training program to prepare nurse specialists in this area and to integrate appropriate UI education into curriculum for health care providers.