**Supplemental Digital Content Table 3**

**Table 3 Functional defecation performance at baseline in patients with rectal cancer**

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Variable** | **Total**(n=171) | **TME with pIONM**(n=82) | **TME without pIONM**(n=89) | *P* |
| **Defecation conditions** |  |  |  |  |
| Pads during the day, n (%) | 26 (16) | 10 (12) | 16 (19) | 0.238 |
| Missing data, n | 6 | 1 | 5 |  |
| Able to wait 15 min before going to the toilet, n (%) | 108 (65) | 52 ( 65) | 56 (64) | 0.932 |
| Missing data, n | 4 | 2 | 2 |  |
| Daily stool frequency, mean, (SD) | 2.8 (2.7) | 2.5 ( 2.7) | 3.0 (2.6) | 0.261 |
| Missing data, n | 5 | 3 | 2 |  |
| Feeling of fragmented emptying, n (%) | 52 (31) | 22 (28) | 30 (35) | 0.305 |
| Missing data, n | 5 | 2 | 3 |  |
| Fecal incontinence at night, n (%) | 6 (4) | 2 (3) | 4 (5) | 0.458 |
| Missing data, n | 5 | 2 | 3 |  |
| **Anal sphincter resting tone\*** |  |  |  | 0.261 |
| No discernable tone at rest, n (%) | 0 (0) | 0 (0) | 0 (0) |  |
| Very low tone, n (%) | 4 (3) | 1 (1) | 3 (4) |  |
| Mildly decreased tone, n (%) | 20 (13) | 6 (8) | 14 (17) |  |
| Normal, n (%) | 128 (80) | 67 (87) | 61 (73) |  |
| Elevated tone, n (%) | 4 (3) | 2(3) | 2 (2) |  |
| Very high tone, n (%) | 4 (3) | 1(1) | 3(4) |  |
| Missing data, n | 11 | 5 |  6 |  |
| **Anal sphincter squeeze tone\*** |  |  |  | 0.419 |
| No discernable increase, n (%) | 0 (0) | 0 (0) | 0 (0) |  |
| Slight increase, n (%) | 4 (3) | 1 (1) | 3 (4) |  |
| Fair increase, n (%) | 23 (14) | 8 (11) | 15 (18) |  |
| Normal, n (%) | 121 (76) | 62 (82) | 59 (71) |  |
| Strong increase, n (%) | 10 (6) | 5 (7) | 5 (6) |  |
| Very strong increase, n (%) | 1 (1) | 0 (0) | 1 (1) |  |
| Missing data, n | 12 | 6 | 6 |  |
| **Medications for regulating bowel movements** |  |  |  |  |
| Laxatives, n (%) | 9 (5) | 5 (6) | 4 (4) |  |
| Anti-diarrheal / constipating medication, n (%) | 7 (4) | 4 (5) | 3 (3) |  |
| Propulsiva, n (%) | 10 (6) | 3 (4) | 7 (8) |  |

TME: total mesorectal excision; pIONM: pelvic intraoperative neuromonitoring; SD: standard deviation; n: number

\* DRESS Score after stoma closure. DRESS: Digital Rectal Exam Scoring System. Orkin BA et al. Dis Colon Rectum 2010;53:1656-1660