

## "Micropenis" and "Small penis": diagnosis and therapy



'V Congresso Nazionale SIA (Società Italiana di Andrologia)', Catania, Italy.  
May 29th - June 1st, 2002. Published in "Rivista di Sessuologia Clinica" VIII-2001/2

Colpi G.M., Martini P., Scropo F.I., Mancini M., Contalbi G., Castiglioni F.  
Servizio di Andrologia, Ospedale San Paolo Polo Universitario, Milano, Italy.

ABSTRACT: "Micropenis" is used to define a penis less than 2.5 SD long compared to the mean length for age and sexual development stage, provided that this organ does not show any other anatomic anomalies. By "small penis" we mean a penis having a size objectively within the standard limits but which is not considered satisfactory by the subject ("Locker-room syndrome"). This disorder is included in dysmorphophobia and is the main reason why some men undergo penile elongation techniques. Measuring performed with stretched penis shows a close correlation with the real length during erection. The mean length of the flaccid penis in Caucasian post-puberal male is 8.8 cm; when stretched it is 12.4 cm (+ 2.7 cm); during erection 12.9 cm, but there is a wide range in different studies. Therefore we talk about a micropenis when its length is  $\leq 6$  cm. Medical treatment is limited to hypogonadic males by increasing serum androgenic values. Several techniques of penis elongation exist, which are based on external stretching of the penis or classic surgery. Surgical techniques include the subtotal dissection of the penile suspensory ligament and the prepubic liposuction. Liposculpture is the insertion of autologous adipose tissue into the penile subcutaneous in order to increase the organ circumference. Among physiotherapeutic techniques, our group is making use of an external penis-stretcher to treat both small penis and penis curvature due to Peyronie's disease. Patient counselling is at all events essential to have a full picture of the problem, since a morbid attention to the size of his own penis might be the symptom of a more complex psychiatric disorder where surgery is powerless or may sometimes even give rise to additional problems.