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18/MHS01/272

BIOMEDICAL ENGINEERING

PHS 212 (HUMAN PHYSIOLOGY)

Write a short note on Micturition

Micturition (urination) is the process of urine excretion from the urinary bladder. Most of the time, the bladder (detrusor muscle) is used to store urine. As it fills, the rugae distend and a constant pressure in the bladder (intra-vesicular pressure) is maintained. This is known as the stress-relaxation phenomenon. The ability to voluntarily control micturition develops from 2 years as the CNS develops.

Micturition is also known as the voiding phase of bladder control and it is typically a short-lasting event. Urinary flow rate in a full bladder is:

* 20-25ml/s in men
* 25-30ml/s in women

Whilst the capacity of the bladder varies from roughly 300-550ml, afferent nerves in the bladder wall signal the need to void the bladder at around 400ml of filling.

**Stages of Micturition**

The urinary bladder has two distinct stages or phases:

1. Resting or filling stage

2. Voiding stage

Resting or Filling Stage

It is in this phase of the bladder that the urine is transported from the kidneys via the ureters into the bladder. The ureters are thin muscular tubes that arise from each of the kidneys and extend downwards where they enter the bladder obliquely.

The oblique placement of the ureters in the bladder wall serves a very important function. The opening of the ureter into the urinary bladder is not guarded by any sphincter or muscle. Therefore, this oblique nature of opening prevents the urine from re-entering the ureters. At the same time, the main muscle of the urinary bladder, the detrusor muscle, is relaxing allowing the bladder to distend and accommodate more urine.

Voiding Stage

During this stage, both the urinary bladder and the urethra come into play together. The detrusor muscle of the urinary bladder which was relaxing so far starts to contract once the bladder’s storage capacity is reached.

The urethra is controlled by two sets of muscles: The internal and external urethral sphincters. The internal sphincter is a smooth muscle whereas the external one is skeletal. Both these sphincters are in a contracted state during the filling stage.