

Urethral bulking agents to be considered as two distinct classes: particulate and non-particulate

December 2019: In view of the recent adverse reporting on the mesh sling procedures, there has been renewed interest in the role of bulking agents for stress urinary incontinence (SUI) and in gaining a better understanding of the materials and their mode of action. In a review article published last month, the authors describe why all bulking agents are not the same.

There are a number of bulking agents currently in use and when reviewing the evidence, two classes of bulking agents can be identified: those made from solid microparticles in an absorbable liquid or gel carrier (particulate agents) and those comprising a homogenous gel (non-particulates) that resists absorption. The two types of bulking agent have different modes of action and achieve their effect of urethral coaptation in different ways. In the case of the particulate bulking agents, their effect is due to their ability to induce a foreign body reaction around the particles resulting in fibrosis formation (capsule) that provides the cushion effect. Bulkamid is the only non-particulate type of bulking agent currently in the SUI market. The bulking effect is obtained from the volume of the hydrogel injected. Host cells enter the hydrogel and form a lasting network of fine fibers, which anchor the gel in situ. Given their different modes of action the authors explained that it follows that differential safety and effectiveness outcomes could be anticipated. More details on this review article can be found at: <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC6858835/>

Commenting on this review article, Dr Ieva Ankorina Stark, Chief Scientific Officer of Contura said: *"The eminent and well published authors have described very diligently and logically why all bulking agents cannot be considered as one single class, in the way that international guidelines currently do. When guidelines for SUI are discussed in the future, it will be important to think of the bulking agent products differentially. Furthermore, the findings in this article highlight that the clinical study results conducted with Bulkamid cannot be transferred to the other particulate bulking agents."*

About Bulkamid

Bulkamid is a soft hydrogel that consists of 2.5% polyacrylamide and 97.5% water. Once injected, Bulkamid provides additional volume to the urethra and acts as a scaffold for cells to grow through, helping to provide long lasting relief of SUI symptoms.

About Female Stress Urinary Incontinence

SUI is very common among women of all ages and increases with age. Other contributing factors include childbirth, obesity or some form of a pelvic floor disorder. SUI is caused by a weakness in the pelvic floor, preventing

the urethra (the tube that urine comes out of) from closing fully when sudden pressure is put on the bladder. This can allow urine to leak out during normal daily activities for example when coughing, laughing, walking or exercising.

About Contura

Contura is headquartered in London and has its manufacturing facility in Copenhagen, Denmark. It specialises in the distribution and sale of healthcare products, both pharmaceuticals and medical devices, focused primarily in women's health. Its lead products are Bulkamid[®], Aquamid[®], Regurin[®] XL and Cystistat[®]. It also has a number of ongoing development programmes focused upon additional uses of its proprietary hydrogel technology, such as Arthrosamid[®] for the treatment of osteoarthritis in the knee. Contura has an established sales and marketing infrastructure in the leading European and worldwide markets, either through its own sales force or through distribution partners. It has its own offices in the UK, Denmark, Germany, France and Italy, currently employing around 50 staff worldwide.

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