

## Life Time Mortality Of Men With Normal And With Subnormal Sperm Counts.

Sabine Groos, Walter Krause

Lifetime morbidity and mortality consequences of male fertility disorders should be studied because:

- Spermatogenesis is one of the few nonpathological examples of continuous cell proliferation in the adult organism. Disorders may serve as models of proliferation disorders in general.
- Maybe not childlessness per se, but compromised fertility may come with a shorter lifespan in the male.
- Lifetime morbidity and mortality of men with normal and subnormal sperm counts diagnosed before and during the alleged sperm quality decline in industrialized countries may help clarifying that question.

Here we in one of the first such studies report on the lifetime mortality of all men with normal and low sperm counts measured in the outpatient facility of the Department of Andrology at Marburg University Hospital from 1949 onwards. Cases with potentially life shortening co-morbidity were excluded. Most men had presented themselves for want of children. We have the birth dates of 634 men (the youngest born in 1937), and the death dates of 196 of them, or we know that they were alive at the end of 2002. Of the 413 normozoospermic men, 113 have died, of the 125 oligozoospermic men, 44 have died, of the 96 azoospermic men, 39 have died. In a lifetable analysis by exact duration of life with birth date and date of sperm count controlled, we observed a cumulative mortality of the three groups of 27,4%, 35,2% and 40,6% resp. The difference between the mortality in the normozoospermia group and that of the two other groups was statistically significant (Gehan statistics 7,150,  $p=.028$ .) We conclude that men with subnormal sperm counts had a lower life expectancy, even if they had no apparent other health problem.