Messages for others
Bladder distension caused by urinary retention during hospital care is a healthcare-related injury that can cause suffering and practical, emotional and psychosocial problems with a great impact on the life of the person affected and anxiety for the future.

The healthcare system must raise awareness and improve preventive routines.

Background
Urinary retention is a common complication following hospital care, which can result in over-distension of the bladder and, at worst, chronic bladder damage and persistent micturition difficulties. In many cases this can be classified as an avoidable patient injury. There is a lack of knowledge about patients’ experiences of micturition problems after bladder distension and how the healthcare-related injury have affected the patients’ everyday lives.

Results
The micturition problems affected the everyday life through constraints (dependence on disposables and access to toilets, clothing restrictions, limitations on social life and career), suffering (pain, infections, impaired sex life, leakage) and concerns for the future (fear of worsening symptoms and fear of losing control with age).

Lack of knowledge among staff, insufficient routines, mistrust and poor communication between health professionals and patients were contributing factors to the health-care related injury.