

Perineal Wounds - Worried?? - Stayfree

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Abstract

Introduction: Perineal wounds are difficult to manage as they need much frequent dressings at the hospital. Conventional dressings are costlier and cause significant discomfort to the patient. Self-dressings using sanitary pads can be tried as an alternative as they are hygienic, easily accessible, comfortable, and cost-effective.

Materials and Methods: A total of 30 patients - 15 in conventional dressing and 15 in sanitary pad dressing compared in terms of compliance, comfort level, number of dressings required at hospital, cost, and return to work.

Results: Patients with sanitary pad dressings were more comfortable with the method of dressing and had very less number of dressings at the hospital. It was very much cost-effective and patients returned very early to work.

Conclusion: Sanitary pad can be used as a good alternative to conventional gauze pad dressings.

Key words: Conventional gauze pad dressing, Sanitary pad dressing, Perineal wounds

INTRODUCTION

Perineum is the area between the pubic symphysis up to the coccyx including the urogenital and perianal region. Wounds in this region are difficult to manage as they easily get contaminated from the urogenital or anal canal proximity. Daily dressings can be very inconvenient to the patient as it involves frequent visit to the hospital and involves a huge financial burden. The heavy padding done can cause significant discomfort to the patient. Frequent soakage of the dressing and malodorous lesions can significantly affect the quality of life of the patient.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

We conducted a prospective study at St. Martha's Hospital from a total of 30 patients were included in the study.

15 received conventional gauze pad dressing, whereas the other 15 were taught sanitary pad dressing and were advised to review in the outpatient department once weekly. The two groups were compared in terms of compliance, comfort level, number of dressings required at hospital, cost, and return to work.

Conventional Dressing

In conventional dressing, betadine and saline are used to clean the wound. Good padding is done to cover the wound and is secured with an adhesive tape (Figure 1). Patient has to come daily to the hospital for dressings.

Sanitary Pad Dressing

The patient after being demonstrated self dressing from POD 1, wherein he applies the pad to his inner wear using the sticky surface of the pad and secures it with the wings of the pad. He applies the prescribed ointment over the part of the area of the pad which comes in contact with the wound and wears the inner wear along with the pad. Patient visits weekly once to the hospital for follow-up.

RESULTS

A number of dressing at the hospital for the conventional group were around 19.53, which cost the patient

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Figure 1: Soakage due to anal canal proximity



Figure 2: Pictures showing difference between the conventional and gauze pad dressing

approximately 2930 rupees. These patients took around 17.53 days to return to work. The other groups received around 8.2 dressings at hospital. Cost incurred was around 1230 rupees and they returned to work as early as 6.2 days. The above result showed sanitary pad dressing being more cost-effective and patient friendly.

15 Patients in each group	Dressings	Mean	P value
Number of dressings at hospital	Conventional	19.53	<0.001
	Sanitary pad dressing	8.20	
Total cost for dressing – in Rupees	Conventional	2,930	<0.001
	Sanitary pad dressing	1,230	
Return to work- number of days	Conventional	17.53	<0.001
	Sanitary pad dressing	6.20	

	Conventional	Sanitary pad
Fistula in Ano	3	3
Peri-anal abscess	5	2
Fournier's gangrene	2	5
Pilonidal wounds	5	5
Total	15	15



Figure 3: Sanitary pad dressing – Shows no bulge over the inner wear



Figure 4: Sanitary pad dressing done to a fistulectomy wound

DISCUSSION

Wounds in the perineum get easily soaked due to anogenital proximity. Patients with such wounds need constant care and frequent change of dressing due to early soakage. It is practically difficult to get al. dressings done at the hospital. Moreover, dressing at hospital can lead to a significant cost burden on the patient and daily travel makes it more inconvenient. Heavy padding done during the dressing makes the patient unable to wear the regular clothing's, thereby limiting one's day-to-day activities Figure 2 and 3. Whereas, dressing using sanitary pad can be done at home without anybody's help by the patient himself, thereby avoiding the cost of dressing at the hospital. The pads are very less bulky Figure 4 and have a very good absorbing capacity. They can be changed any number of times as and when it is soaked, which can help in faster healing of the wound. As they can be worn under regular garments without any discomfort, patient can return to work very early with confidence Figure 3. The pads are hygienic, easily available, and cost-effective and have already been tried as an alternative to conventional dressings.

In 1998 Smooth EC used sanitary pad as an alternative for dressing in post op wounds.^[1] Similar studies were published in 1999 and 2003 by Varon J and Demir A respectively.^[2,3] Shetty VD used sanitary pads to dress the hip and knee replacement surgery wounds in 2010.^[4]

CONCLUSION

As sanitary pads are hygienic, easily available, and cost-effective, more comfortable and self-dressing can be done by the patient, it can be used as an alternative to the conventional gauze pad dressing for perineal wounds.

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