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Choice of equipment and quality of life for people with stoma

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Abstract

The selection of stoma equipment is a highly individual matter for each patient. While taking care of the stoma patient, the nurse has a difficult task to overcome, which solution will make the patient feel comfortable. In the case of a correctly formed stoma, while maintaining the basic principles of stoma hygiene, care does not cause many difficulties. The most problematic is the concave stoma, in the abdominal fold and the convex stoma. The proper selection of equipment will prevent leakage and skin changes at a later stage. It will also improve the comfort and quality of life of people with a formed stoma. The nurse's role is to properly fit the equipment that will perfectly seal the stoma, prevent leakage, loosening of the stoma bag and make the patient not to rely on constant thinking about his or her illness.

Keywords: concave stoma, convex stoma, caring for a patient with a stoma

Introduction

One of the forms of procedures in the surgical intestinal diseases treatment is the production of abdominal anus, called the stoma. Stomas are used mainly in the treatment of colonic and rectal cancer, which makes it difficult for the patient to control bowel movements. They are also used in the case of cancer obstruction [1]. Care of a properly performed stoma is relatively simple. It

does not provide the patient with any difficulties while maintaining the rules of its care. The so-called difficult stoma becomes problematic when, for various reasons, its appearance changes. Dressing becomes impossible. The task of the stoma/dressing nurse or the patient and/or his or her family is to choose the right stoma equipment so that the patient does not have concerns about leakage, stripping off or feeling unpleasant odours. Properly selected equipment makes the patient feel safe and comfortable and the stoma does not interfere with everyday life.

The aim of work

The aim of this paper is to discuss the problem of stoma patient care with special attention to a patient with a concave stoma, in the abdominal fold and convex stoma (parastomal hernias). Taking care of such a patient requires from the nurse extraordinary commitment, sense of responsibility, knowledge and experience in the proper selection of stoma equipment, which depends on the type of stoma, patient's preferences, manual skills, as well as possible complications that may occur.

Material and methods

The paper uses the method of systematic review of literature, on the basis of which it is discussed how to protect the convex stoma, concave stoma or in the abdominal fold and the problems that may occur during an improperly cared for stoma.

Discussion of results

Parastomal hernia is a pathological increase in abdominal cavity content or preperitoneal fat due to a defect in the membranes to the hernia bag in a patient with a stoma formed. It often coexists with the hernia in the postoperative scar after the mid-cut. It is the most common and one of the most serious local late complications of the stoma, which significantly reduces the quality of life of patients [2]. It can lead to deformities in the abdominal shells around the stoma and in the hernia area, which can lead to difficulties in the dressing of properly selected stoma equipment, preventing leakage and skin irritation [3]. A well-educated nurse plays an important role, who will advise the patient what equipment is recommended for his stoma. On the Polish market, there is a stoma equipment dedicated to the convex stoma, which will protect the patient, improve their quality of life, comfort and safety.

Concave stoma - pulled in, it is one that sank below skin level. The cause is excessive intestinal tension, also occurring as a late complication in people who have taken on weight. In this complication, the hole in the stoma is located at the bottom of the funnel-shaped skin hollow, which makes it difficult to place the stoma equipment and leads to recurrent skin complications [2].

A stoma in the abdominal fold is a stoma formed in a wrong place, usually invisible to the patient. The reason for this is the lack of marking the stoma location before surgery. This condemns the patient to continuous leakage, which causes skin inflammation [2].

The dressing of a patient with a concave stoma and in the abdominal fold will be discussed collectively. These are the stoma for which convex equipment available on the Polish and foreign markets is recommended. For this type of equipment a strap attached to the bag is also recommended, which additionally protects the bag. Stomy accessories are also required, e.g. a paste that fills up unevenness and seals the bag. The convexity of the plate makes the stoma e.g. extend above the abdomen surface by pressing on the surrounding tissues.

Based on our own experience in dressing patients in the stoma clinic, it can be concluded that nurses do not always choose the right stoma equipment for the individual needs of the patient.

Patients feel uncomfortable due to leakage, fear of the stoma bag peeling off, aversion to contact with others due to unpleasant smell. Their quality of life also decreases.

The convex equipment is an alternative primarily for concave stoma and in the abdominal fold, but also for flat stoma. This is the system of choice for a more secure stoma, prevent leakage and skin complications. It is also the comfort and safety of the patient in everyday functioning [4,5]. One of the main goals of stoma care is the effective sealing of the stoma and the area around the stoma. Convex products are now regarded as an important tool to achieve this goal. They are also the preferred tool for use with flat or sunken stoma as they provide better sealing in the case of irregular surfaces around the stoma, such as wrinkles or folds [6].

Incorrectly selected stoma equipment causes various complications in the skin around the stoma. Their time of occurrence from the moment of irritation is very fast, which is why it is so important to observe and care for it during each change of the stoma sac. The noticed skin defect should be cared for immediately after its appearance to prevent further development of complications. There are many stoma care products available on the market which, if used properly, make the skin around your stoma healthy and non-irritating.

The most common cause of skin damage is leakage of the intestinal contents under the patch, so it is important to check the contents of the stoma bag and change it regularly. Another equally important problem is the pressure caused by the wrong choice of underwear and clothing, causing the stoma bag to leak or unseal. Another matter is the wrong choice of stoma equipment, which causes leakage, e.g. in the case of a concave stoma, flat-type equipment. An important element to be considered is an incorrectly cut hole in the stoma bag. A small one will irritate the mucous membrane, a large one will cause skin injuries. Also noteworthy is the incorrect location of the stoma, e.g. in the abdominal fold, which disrupts proper sticking of the stoma equipment and its holding. Also important is the incorrect peeling off of the stoma equipment causing skin damage. The more often this happens, the more sensitive and irritated the skin becomes. Another worth noting is improper care of the skin around the stoma, through improper use of stoma care products, which as a result can irritate the skin, dry it or damage the epidermis. The other problem may be diarrhoea, which in case of improper care will cause inflammatory changes in the skin around the stoma [3].

When taking care of a stoma patient, it is also important to pay attention to the quality of life of patients experiencing leakage, stoma equipment sticking off. According to Ayalon R., Bachner YG and Lai E. and co-authors in their research, the vast majority of patients with a formed stoma experience a significant reduction in their quality of life. There are few studies that address the quality of life of elderly stoma patients [7,8]. Meanwhile, Seo HW, on the basis of research conducted among Korean stoma patients, concludes that it is advisable to develop educational programs [9].

Conclusion

A nurse as a professional involved in health care issues and actively participating in the process of implementing health services has to meet very high requirements taking into account the quality of provided services. The care of a stoma patient is a narrow specialty in which the nurse has to identify herself. Taking into account the obligation of the nurse to continue training, the nurse is able to cope with this matter. Taking care of a stoma patient is extremely difficult, requiring constant improvement of qualifications and skills. Working with a stoma patient requires from a nurse an extraordinary commitment, sense of responsibility, knowledge and experience in the proper selection of stoma equipment, which depends on the type of stoma, patient's preferences, manual ability, as well as any complications that may occur. It is becoming

increasingly clear that there are still many areas in which the quality of life of this group of people can be improved. Would it be possible to improve stoma care by early recognition of the need for a convex solution? Would we thus be able to prevent patients from attempting and making mistakes that negatively affect their quality of life? Are there rooted practices or beliefs that are difficult to overcome and thus prevent healthcare professionals from introducing new evidence-based therapies?

In order to ensure the best possible quality of life for people with intimate healthcare needs, we want to recommend patients the ideal equipment that will make our stoma patients feel comfortable every day, prevent leakage and the fear of the bag sticking out will be kept to a minimum.

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