The Use of an Antimicrobial Dressing to Help Improve Outcomes for Patients with Pressure Ulcers in a Skilled Nursing Facility

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BACKGROUND:

Patients who require admission to a Skilled Nursing Facility are not only at risk for development or progression of pressure ulcers, they are also at an increased risk for infection at the wound site and beyond. Risk factors for the development of pressure ulcers include immobility, moisture from urine or feces, malnutrition, and underlying medical conditions[1].

The cost of treating a pressure ulcer is estimated to be $40,000 per ulcer.[2] The prevention and control of healthcare acquired and infected pressure ulcers is an upcoming National Patient Safety Goal established by the Joint Commission on Accreditation of Health Care Organizations. Infection rates are estimated as high as 2.1% and can have a substantial social and economic impact;[3] due to increased length of stay, surgery and potentially death. It is estimated that the incremental cost of an infected ulcer is $11,809[3].

METHODOLOGY:

A population of 16 adult patients at an acute care hospital was monitored for two key wound behavioral attributes for a period of 4 months.

- Improvement in wound appearance and status
- Appearance of surrounding skin

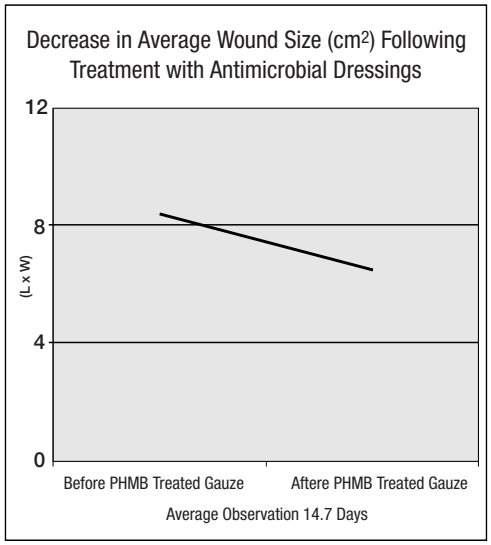
Patient ages ranged from 73 to 94 with a median age of 84 years of age. Co-morbidities included diabetes, hypertension, chronic pulmonary conditions and malignancies. Average length of wound care therapy was 14.7 days.

RESULTS:

Patients with pressure ulcers were evaluated on day 1; wound was measured and staged with documentation of tissue appearance and color. Dressings impregnated with Polyhexamethylene Biguanide* (PHMB) were applied to the wound. The antimicrobial dressings were used as primary wound coverings or as packing material. The average wound size changed by 23% during study timeframe. In 69% of patients studied, wound size and appearance improved. All wounds showed a significant decrease in infection indicators.

CONCLUSIONS:

The use of a PHMB impregnated dressing improved the appearance and status of pressure ulcers, helped minimize infection and helped prevent further breakdown of surrounding skin in the majority of patients evaluated on a skilled nursing facility.



Product Notation:

*KERLIX™ AMD™ Antimicrobial Dressing, Tyco Healthcare Group LP

References:

[1] *APIC Text of Infection Control and Epidemiology, Volume II, 41-8; 2005*

[2] *LTC Update, Issue 2, 2005; Joint Commission on Accreditation of Healthcare Organizations.*

[3] *Phillips T, Stanton B, Provan A, Lew R. A study of the impact of leg Ulcers on quality of Life: financial, Socail and Psychological implications*

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