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Role of Innovative Splints in Protecting Skin Grafts

Barath Kumar Singh P¹, Ravi Kumar Chittoria²

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Abstract

Skin grafting are most common surgeries performed in field of plastic surgery. Post-operatively patient may need to maintain the particular position to preserve the viability of the Skin grafts to prevent the direct pressure application over the recently raised loco regional flap. Skin grafts over the back will be very cumbersome for the patient postoperatively to maintain the prone and lateral position to prevent the direct pressure over the Skin grafts. In this case report we will assess the role innovative splint to prevent the application of direct pressure over skin grafts in lower back.

Keywords: Flaps; Protective splints; Innovation.

INTRODUCTION

A Skin grafts is harvested when the surgeon needs to cover the raw area that needs to be covered, known as the recipient site in the local site. Skin grafts can be used to cover the raw area variety of body parts. The head, neck, chest, or breast areas, arms and legs, and the lower back, buttocks, or vagina are all examples. In this case report we will assess the use of innovative ring splints in post-operative care of the surgical site with skin grafts.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

In this case report, 32 year old male came to JIPMER Hospital with the chronic non healing ulcer over the lower back of size 5 X 5 cm for past 10 year post electrical burns. After wide local excision of the ulcer histopathology report came as Squamous cell carcinoma with all margins negative for tumor. After tumor removal size of the tumor ulcer size was around 8 x 8 cm. In view of scarred tissue all around the ulcer, local keystone flap based on the perforator on the right side of the ulcer and transposition flap on left side of the ulcer planned. The raw area created post local flaps from the donor site was covered with split skin grafting from the left thigh. Post-operative care for the flap and skin graft was done with innovative ring splint made from cotton roll and pad made into a ring and fixed around the flap site so that even if the patient lies flat flap site was protected by the splint from direct pressure over the skin grafted site. The cost of making the innovative splint is very minimal and is readily and easily applicable.

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RESULTS

In this case report, patient was comfortable postoperatively with the splint, the patient compliance is good as patient can mobile in any

direction in bed without any harm to the skin grafted site. The patient was very happy with splint as he feels less pain post-operative with well-padded splint even if the patient lies flat with the surgery over the lower back region.

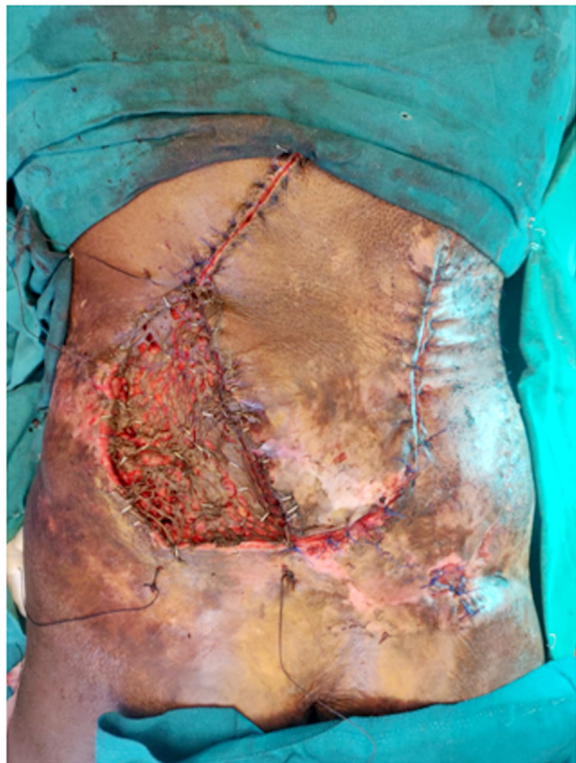


Fig. 1: Transposition flap.



Fig. 2: Protective Ring splint for local flap

DISCUSSION

Skin grafts are to be protected post surgery, for monitoring and splinting we will splint the region with the customized splint or Plaster of Paris.¹ This method helps in a way to protect the skin grafts. The positioning and splinting should be important post surgery for skin grafting as it minimizes edema formation, prevent tissue destruction, maintain tissue in an elongated state to facilitate recovery and adopt the anti-contracture position. Physical therapy and splinting should immediately after the injury as they play an important role in different body parts function, especially in hand function. The splints are used to hold parts of the body so that the skin graft and flaps can be immobilized and protected while healing.² The skin can be prevented from shrinkage and contractures while healing. The new grafts and flaps are protected. The deformity is prevented and/or corrected. There are 3 types of splints usually used with namely static, static progressive and dynamic splints.^{3,4} Static or Primary splints are used in the acute phase for skin

graft protection after surgery or anti-contracture positioning. These splints are applied to adjacent intact skin. Static progressive or postural splints are used after the graft phase when there is no sufficient Range of movements (ROM) obtained with static positioning and exercise. These splints may be implemented for correction and contractures commonly used in burns patients. Dynamic or follow-up splints are used to increase function by providing a slow force to stretch a contracture or provide resistive force for exercise post surgery or post burns.

CONCLUSION

Loco regional flaps, free flaps, Skin grafts are commonly performed procedures in plastic surgery department. In this study we can able to appreciate the role of Innovative Splint in Protection of skin grafts. This was based on single case report, so validity of the splints should be tested by using it widely in many patients in future. These splints can be easily adaptable and can be used in any hospital.

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Impact of Computer Assisted Teaching Regarding Menopausal Transition among Women Residing at Rural Community Amritsar, Punjab

Vijayalakshmi

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Abstract

Context: Menopause is a significant life event affecting millions of women globally. Menopausal transition is a difficult process and has a considerable variation among women regarding the manifestation of menopausal signs and symptoms.

Aims: Evaluate the effectiveness of computer assisted teaching on menopausal transition among women residing at selected rural community.

Methods and Material: A double blind study was conducted among women aged 40-55 years residing at Tarsika rural community, Amritsar, Punjab. The research design was true experimental i.e. Randomized controlled trial design. Simple random sampling technique was used to select 300 samples for the study. The tool used for the study was menopause rating scale. Computer assisted teaching was given to the experimental group immediately after pretest. Post-test I and II was conducted after one month and third month respectively.

Statistical analysis used: The data gathered was analyzed by descriptive and inferential statistics.

Results: Results revealed that in the control group, majority of women (42.7%, 47.3% and 58.7%) had severe and moderate level of menopausal transition during pretest, posttest-I and posttest-II respectively where as in experimental group, majority of women (48.7%) had severe level of menopausal transition during pretest but there was a marked change observed in the posttest-I and II level of menopausal transition. After computer assisted teaching in the experimental group, majority of women had mild level of menopausal transition (70.7% and 72.7%) in post-test I and post-test II.

Conclusion: The findings revealed that the provision of computer assisted teaching has reduced the severity of menopausal symptoms and very effective during menopausal transition.

Keywords: Menopause; Menopausal transition; Computer assisted teaching.

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INTRODUCTION

The menopausal transition is a natural process and a developmental phase of life. In many women menopausal transition is a troublesome period of life and is often associated with decreased well-being and number of symptoms.¹ Women going through the menopause transition may experience a variety of symptoms ranging from

vasomotor symptoms to sleep disturbance, mood disorders, loss of sexual desire and vaginal dryness. The symptoms can make it a considerable struggle for those who are already dealing with their hectic lives.² Large efforts are required to educate and make women to be aware of menopausal symptoms.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Impact of Computer Assisted Teaching regarding Menopausal Transition among Women residing at Rural Community Amritsar, Punjab.

OBJECTIVES

- Assess the menopausal transition among women residing at selected rural community.
- Evaluate the effectiveness of computer assisted teaching on menopausal transition among women residing at selected rural community.
- Find out the association between menopausal transition and selected demographic variables of women.

HYPOTHESIS

HO1: There is a statistically significant change in menopausal transition between women those who attend the computer assisted teaching than those who do not.

HO2: There is a statistically significant association between menopausal transition and selected demographic variables among study group.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Research approach : Evaluative approach.

Research Design : Randomized Control Trail; True Experimental Design.

Setting of the Study : Rural community, Tarsika, Baba Bakala, Amritsar, Punjab.

Target Population : Women with in the age group 40-55 years.

Sample Size : Total three hundred women with in the age group 40-55 years in that 150 samples were control group and the other 150

samples were study group.

Sampling Technique : Simple random sampling by lottery method.

DESCRIPTION OF THE TOOL

The tool consists of two sections.

Section-I

It is demographic variables of women which consist of 2 parts.

- Part-A consists of Background variables such as age, marital status, educational status of woman, educational status of husband, occupational status of woman, type of family, family socioeconomic status, type of diet, Sources of health information and Distance of health care facility from house.
- Part-B consists of Clinical variables such as parity of woman, number of health visits per year, suffering from any menopausal symptoms, suffering from any chronic illness, taking hormone replacement therapy, taking calcium supplements and doing any exercise.

Section-II

- The Menopause rating scale consists of 11 symptoms of menopause. It includes 5 columns for responses (None, mild, moderate, severe and very severe) with a score of 0, 1, 2, 3 and 4 respectively.

SCORING PROCEDURE

Section-II

Menopause rating scale was developed by ZEG Berlin center for epidemiology and health research.³ MRS is used to assess the symptoms of menopause (Menopausal transition) consisting of 11 items. It includes 5 columns for responses (None, mild, moderate, severe and very severe) with a score of 0, 1, 2, 3 and 4 respectively. Total score is 44.

Menopause symptoms	Score	Percentage
No symptoms	0	0%
Mild symptoms	1-11	1-25%
Moderate symptoms	12-22	26-50%
Severe symptoms	23-33	51-75%
Very severe symptoms	34-44	76-100%

RELIABILITY

The reliability of the tool- menopause rating scale is standardized tool and found to be highly reliable.

Pilot Study

Pilot study was conducted for thirty women (15 as control group and 15 as study group) to find out the effectiveness of computer assisted teaching regarding menopausal transition in Tarsika rural community at Amritsar for a period of 30 days to find out the feasibility of the study and to plan for data analysis on the basis of pilot study. Written permission was obtained from the medical officer of Tarsika community health center and oral consent was obtained from the subjects after explaining the purpose of the study. Researcher has given training to one ASHA health worker about data collection.

Data was collected by one ASHA health worker who was trained by the researcher. First 15 samples were selected as control group for data collection. Pretest was conducted for each woman to collect the demographic variables and to assess the menopausal transition with structured tool. Then the investigator selected 15 samples for study group and pretest was conducted with same tool. Immediately after the pretest, computer assisted teaching on menopause for 45 minutes was given only to the study group by using laptop as small group teaching. After 15 days of pretest, posttest was conducted for both control group and study group with the same tool to assess the effectiveness of computer assisted teaching.

Data were analyzed and findings of the pilot study showed that there was a mild change found between pretest and posttest level of menopausal symptoms in study group. There is no significant association found between level of menopausal transition and

selected background variables among study group. After the pilot study results concluded that it is feasible and practicable to conduct the main study.

DATA COLLECTION PROCEDURE

True experimental research study was conducted by using double blind study method. For double blind study researcher had selected 2 ASHA health workers as investigators and given training for taking survey and data collection procedure. Then researcher clarified their doubts and evaluated by asking questions. Written permission from the medical officer of CHC in Tarsikarural community was obtained. Investigators visited the selected rural community Tarsika and taken survey of women aged between 40-55 years. Three hundred Samples were selected randomly by lottery method from survey report on the basis of inclusion criteria. Oral consent from the samples were obtained. In that first 150 was considered as control group and next 150 as study group. Primly, validated menopause rating scale was administered for control and study group, followed by computer assisted teaching given only to the study group. Teaching was given as small group teaching with 2-3 samples. Posttest-I was conducted after one month with the same tools for both the group. Information booklet was given to the study group for reinforcement purpose immediately after posttest-I. After three months the same tools were administered for the same samples for posttest-II. Collected data were coded, tabulated and analyzed by descriptive and inferential statistics.

STATISTICAL ANALYSIS

Data were put to statistical inferences by using SPSS software package.

S. No.	Data analysis	Methods	Purpose
1.	Descriptive statistics	Frequency percentage mean Standard deviation.	To assess the pretest and posttest level of menopausal transition among study group and control group.
2.	Inferential statistics	Paired 't' test	To find out the differences in pretest and posttest level of menopausal transition among study and control group.
		Independent 't' test	To find out the effectiveness of computer assisted teaching on menopausal transition between study group and control group
		Chi-square test ANOVA	To find out the association between demographic variables and posttest level of menopausal transition in study group.

RESULTS

Findings related to Demographic Variables of Women

In the control group, majority of the women were

belonging to 40-45 years (45.3%), married (87.3%), having primary education (32.7%), house wife (76.7%) and vegetarian (72.7%). The data revealed that majority were belonging to nuclear family (72.7%), having 1-3 children (75.3%) and monthly family socio economic status up to 30000 and above

(30.7%). Clinical variables depicts that majority of women had menarche at the age of 13-15 years (58.7%), marriage at 19-22 years (61.3%) and not attained menopause (66%). Most of them were peri-menopausal (43.3%), suffering from no illness (47.3%), not taking hormone replacement therapy (93.3%), not taking calcium supplements (56.7%) and not doing any exercise (59.3%). Total 36% of women were not going for health checkup whole year. Distance of health care facility from the house was less than 5km for most of the women (64%). Majority of woman's husband (28.7%) were having secondary education. Majority of women (46.7%) got information from peer and family members.

In study group, majority of the women belonged to more than 52 years (44.7%), married (85.3%), illiterate (54.7%), house wife (63.3%) and vegetarian (77.3%). The data revealed that majority were belonging to nuclear family (50%), having 1-3 children (52%) and monthly family socio economic status up to 5000 (84%). Clinical variables depicts that majority of women had menarche at the age of more than 15 years (59.3%), marriage at 19-22 years (69.3%) and not attained menopause (70.66%). Most of them were peri-menopausal (65.3%), not suffering from any illness (55.3%), not taking hormone replacement therapy (98%), not taking calcium supplements (81.3%) and not doing any exercise (82%). Total 52% of women were not going for health checkup whole year. Distance of health care facility from the house was less than 5Km for most of the women (72%). Majority of woman's husband (42.7%) were illiterate. Majority of women (58%) got information from peer and family members.

First objective- Assess the menopausal transition among women residing at selected rural community

Data analysis showed that during pretest in both control and study group, most of the women (42.7% and 48.7%) had severe level of menopausal symptoms respectively. The mean score of pretest level of menopausal symptoms in the control group and study group were (13.53 ± 4.739) and (22.65 ± 6.921) respectively and the 't' value 2.400 was significant at 0.05 level.

During posttest-I in control group, majority of women (47.3%) had moderate level of menopausal transition where as in the study group, majority of women had mild symptoms (70.7%). The mean score of posttest-I level of menopausal transition in the study group (8.60 ± 4.197) was lower than the control group (18.25 ± 8.516) and the 't' value -12.445 was significant at 0.05 level. Hence there

is a statistically significant change in menopausal transition between menopausal women those who attend the computer assisted teaching than those who do not. So hypothesis (H01) is accepted.

During post-test II in control group, majority of women (58.7%) had moderate level of menopausal transition where as in the study group, majority of women had mild symptoms (72.7%). The mean score of post-test II level of menopausal transition in the study group (8.34 ± 4.068) was lower than the control group (20.87 ± 6.672) and the 't' value -19.644 was significant at 0.05 level. So hypothesis (H01) is accepted.

In the control group, majority of women (42.7%, 47.3% and 58.7%) had severe and moderate level of menopausal transition during pretest, posttest-I and posttest-II respectively. In study group, majority of women (48.7%) had severe level of menopausal transition during pretest where as in posttest-I and II, marked changes were observed in the level of menopausal transition after computer assisted teaching. Majority of women had mild level of menopausal transition (70.7% and 72.7%) in posttest I and posttest II.

Second objective- Evaluate the effectiveness of computer assisted teaching on menopausal transition among women residing at selected rural community

The mean score of pretest and posttest-I level of menopausal transition in the control group were (20.51 ± 8.403) and (18.25 ± 8.516) respectively. The mean score of pretest and posttest-I level of menopausal transition in the study group were (22.65 ± 6.921) and (8.60 ± 4.197) respectively. The post test-I mean score (8.60 ± 4.197) was lower than the pretest mean score (22.65 ± 6.921) , the 't' value 24.322 was significant at 0.05 level in the study group. The post test-I mean score (18.25 ± 8.516) was slightly lower than the pretest mean score (20.51 ± 8.403) the 't' value 2.580 was significant at 0.05 level in the control group. The mean posttest-I scores of menopausal transition in the study group (8.60 ± 4.197) was significantly lower than the mean posttest-I scores of menopausal transition in the control group (18.25 ± 8.516) . Hence there is a statistically significant change in menopausal transition between menopausal women those who attend the computer assisted teaching than those who do not. So hypothesis (H01) is accepted.

The mean score of pretest and posttest-II level of menopausal transition in the control group were (20.51 ± 8.403) and (20.87 ± 6.672) respectively. The mean score of pretest and posttest-II level of

menopausal transition in the study group were (22.65 ± 6.921) and (8.34 ± 4.068) respectively. The post test-I mean score (8.34 ± 4.068) was lower than the pretest mean score (22.65 ± 6.921), the 't' value 23.153 was significant at 0.05 level in the study group. The post test-II mean score (20.87 ± 6.672) was slightly higher than the pretest mean score (20.51

± 8.403) the 't' value -0.452 was not significant at 0.05 level in the control group. The mean posttest-II scores of menopausal transition in the study group (8.34 ± 4.068) was significantly lower than the mean posttest-II scores of menopausal transition in the control group (20.87 ± 6.672). So hypothesis (H01) is accepted.

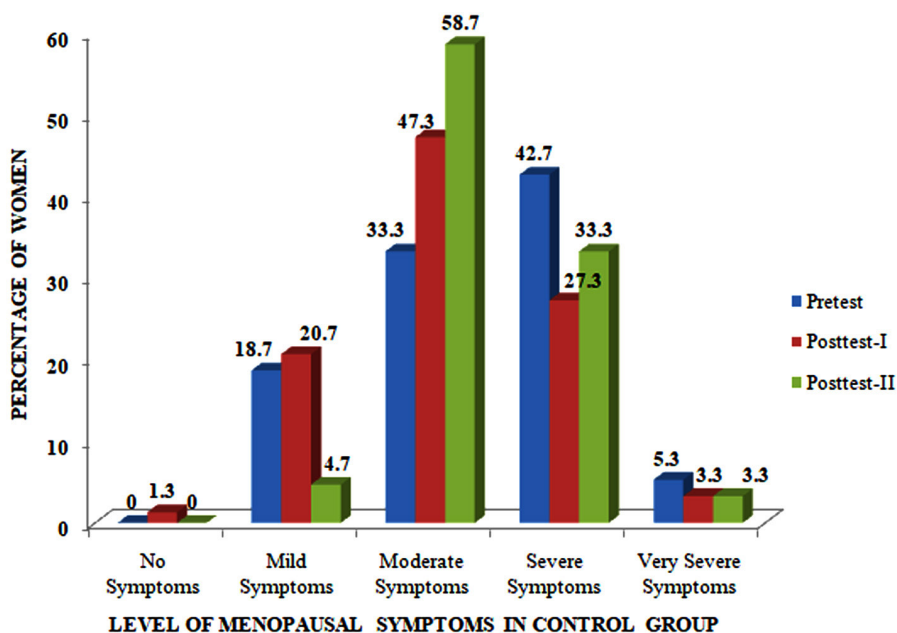


Fig. 1: Comparison of level of menopausal symptoms between pre-test and post-test in control group

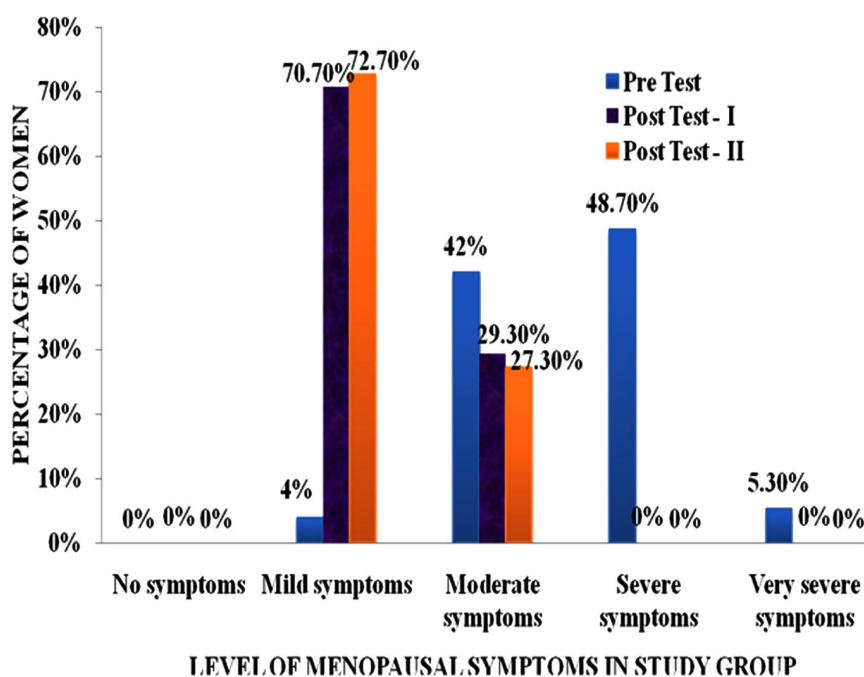


Fig. 2: Comparison of level of menopausal symptoms between pretest and posttest in study group

Table 1: Frequency, percentage, mean, standard deviation and 't' value distribution of posttest-I symptoms level of women regarding menopause in control and study group(n¹=150; n²=150)

S. No.	Group	Posttest-I Symptoms level	F	%	Mean	Standard deviation	't' value	P value
1	Control group	No symptoms	2	1.3				
		Mild symptoms	31	20.7				
		Moderate symptoms	71	47.3	18.25	± 8.516		
		Severe symptoms	41	27.3				
		Very severe symptoms	5	3.3			-12.445 (S)	0.000
2	Study group	No symptoms	0	0				
		Mild symptoms	106	70.7				
		Moderate symptoms	44	29.3	8.60	± 4.197		
		Severe symptoms	0	0				
		Very severe symptoms	0	0				

S= Significant; NS=Not significant; P≤0.05 level

Table 2: Frequency, percentage, mean, standard deviation and 't' value distribution of posttest-II symptoms level of women regarding menopause in control and study group(n¹=150; n²=150)

S. No.	Group	Posttest-II Symptoms level	F	%	Mean	SD	't' value	P value
1	Control group	No symptoms	0	0				
		Mild symptoms	7	4.7				
		Moderate symptoms	88	58.7				
		Severe symptoms	50	33.3	20.87	± 6.672		
		Very severe symptoms	5	3.3			-19.644 (S)	0.000
2	Study group	No symptoms	0	0				
		Mild symptoms	109	72.7				
		Moderate symptoms	41	27.3	8.34	± 4.068		
		Severe symptoms	0	0				
		Very severe symptoms	0	0				

S= Significant; NS=Not significant; P≤0.05 level

Third objective- Find out the association between menopausal transition with selected demographic variables of women

Results showed that there was significant association found between posttest-II level of menopausal transition of women with their selected demographic variables, when compared to age (=6.387) and education status of woman (=11.853). So hypothesis (H02) is accepted.

There was no significant association found between posttest-II level of menopausal transition of women with other demographic variables such as marital status, education status of the husband, Occupation, type of family, monthly family socio economic status, type of diet, sources of health information, distance of health care facility from house, age at

menarche, age at marriage, age at menopause, parity of women, number of health visit per year, menopausal symptom status, chronic illness status, taking HRT, taking calcium and doing exercise.

DISCUSSION

The study findings are congruent with the study conducted by Leena D Souza and Anitha C Rao (2012) in Karnataka to assess the health problems among 50 urban and 50 rural menopausal women which revealed that 50% of the rural menopausal women had experienced moderate symptoms, 16% had severe symptoms while 14% had mild symptoms and remaining 20% had not experienced symptoms. The study concludes that menopausal health problems were more prevalent among

women residing in rural area when compared to the women residing in urban area.

These findings are consistent with a study conducted in Israel by Rotem M. et. al., (2005) to examine the impact of psycho-educational program for improving woman's attitudes and coping with menopause symptoms revealed that participants reported significant improvements in attitudes and reductions in symptom severity compared to their own baseline scores and compared with the control group.

CONCLUSION

Results revealed that in the control group, majority of women (42.7%, 47.3% and 58.7%) had severe and moderate level of menopausal transition during pretest, posttest-I and posttest-II respectively where as in study group, majority of women (48.7%) had severe level of menopausal transition during pretest but there was a marked change observed in the posttest-I and II level of menopausal transition. After computer assisted teaching in the study group, majority of women had mild level of menopausal transition (70.7% and 72.7%) in post-test I and post-test II respectively. Thus computer assisted teaching was effective in reducing menopausal symptoms.

Acknowledgement

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Conflict of interest

This study is self-funded research work. So there is no conflict of interest.

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Role of Cyclic Negative Pressure wound Therapy in the Management of Thermal Burns

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Abstract

Burns are one of the leading cause of morbidity and death in children. Every physician and surgeon should always have a basic knowledge about the care of thermally injured child. Burn injury is a chronic disease requiring long term treatment and supervised rehabilitation, reconstructive surgery and psychosocial support.

Keywords: Thermal injury; Cyclic Negative Pressure; Wound Therapy.

INTRODUCTION

Since the introduction of the cyclic negative pressure wound therapy (NPWT) system by Morykwas and Argenta, it has been applied to a number of wounds and has become an influential and effective technique for healing simple and complex wounds. The conventional cyclic NPWT system adopts either 'intermittent' or 'continuous' mode.

While the continuous mode constantly applies a sub-atmospheric pressure of 125 mmHg, the intermittent mode creates a sub-atmospheric

pressure of 125 mmHg for 5 minutes and a 2 minutes resting phase of 0 mmHg.

In experiments performed on animal models, the intermittent mode showed increased perfusion level and formation of granulation tissue in the wound area compared with the continuous mode.^{1,2} Despite the effectiveness of intermittent mode in wound healing, it has been avoided in clinical application because of the pain occurring every few minutes during the initiation phase of the system to reach 125 mmHg.³⁻⁶

The cyclic NPWT system is similar to the intermittent mode in terms of using the same maximal sub atmospheric pressure, but the pressure never reaches zero in the cyclic mode. So, it continuously creates certain pressure gradient that oscillates between 125 mmHg and the preset sub atmospheric pressure. The cycle runs based on the changes in sub atmospheric pressure, not time, and thus its frequency reflects the wound volume. In this article we present a case of a one year old male child who presented with second degree superficial burns over the chest, abdomen and right upper limb and the use of cyclic NPWT.

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MATERIAL AND METHODS

This study was conducted in the Department of Plastic Surgery in a tertiary care institute. Informed consent was obtained from the patient under study. Department scientific committee approval was obtained. It is a single center, non-randomized, non-controlled study. The patient under study was a 1 year old male child, with no other known comorbidities. Patient was analyzed systematically and was found to have second degree superficial burns to his chest, abdomen and right upper limb. Wound bed was prepared in accordance with TIME concept mentioned in the guidelines, the ulcer was serially assessed and documented according to bates – Jensen wound assessment tool. Non-viable necrotic tissue was managed with multiple sessions of surgical & hydro debridement. Infection was managed with local antimicrobials & antibiotics according to culture sensitivity. As wound was wet in nature, moisture control was done using cyclic negative pressure wound therapy. Cyclic negative pressure wound pressure therapy sittings was applied twice. (Fig. 1)



Fig. 1: Superficial burns at presentation.

RESULTS

Wound bed gradually improved, clinical decision was taken to reconstruct with skin grafting. (Fig. 2).



Fig. 2: Cyclic negative pressure wound therapy applied on wound.



Fig. 3: Wound underwent skin grafting following wound bed preparation after cyclic negative pressure wound therapy

DISCUSSION

The cyclic mode operates its negative pressure in a manner similar to the sine wave by cycling through the designated negative pressures. Once it hits the upper target pressure of 125 mmHg, the pressure system shuts off and the pressure slowly drops till the lower target pressure is reached, regardless of time. As the change in the intralesional pressure is measured, the drop velocity of the pressure is closely associated with the defect volume in the cyclic mode. In other words, the larger the volume of defect, the shorter the time taken for completing one cycle of the system.

Improved tensile strength in in vivo research has previously showed increased collagen I production in wound healing. This rise could be owing to the pro-angiogenic effect of increased vascular endothelial growth factor and fibroblast growth factor levels. Both growth factors are involved in the wound healing process, namely in the stages of hemostasis, proliferation, and repair, and so influence wound healing. VEGF also controls cell proliferation, differentiation, and migration during angiogenesis. This encourages the creation of new capillaries, allowing for better circulation to the wound site and hence the delivery of critical nutrients and oxygen. The increased expression of certain mediators, such as IL-1 and monocyte Chemo attractant Protein-1, causes VEGF to be stimulated (MCP-1).³

Human and animal's studies have shown increased growth of granulation tissue, increased blood flow, diminution of the wound area, and regulation of inflammatory response with VAC therapy.⁷ VAC causes wound contraction, stabilization of the wound environment, decreased edema with removal of wound exudates, and micro deformation of cells. These effects allow VAC to accelerate wound healing by virtue of increase blood flow; reduced bacterial load; and improved wound bed preparation for subsequent coverage. The compression of tissue by negative pressure causes tissue hypoxia due to decreases perfusion beneath the foam which stimulates angio-neogenesis, and local vasodilatation due to release of nitric oxide.^{8,9,10}

Micro deformation/micro strain of cells due to VAC causes tissue expansion effect with release of growth factors. This tissue expansion effect is due to the differential pressure in the tissues after negative pressure application. The pressure within the cells is positive; while the pressure outside the cells and beneath the dressing is negative. This may

lead to expansion of cells, growth of granulation tissue and pulling of wound edges closer to one another reducing wound size.

CONCLUSION

Cyclic application of "negative pressure" results in a superior local enhancement of cutaneous microcirculation with regards to blood flow and consecutive tissue oxygenation. Beyond that, repeated alterations between different levels of "negative pressure" due to cyclic application represent a greater stimulus for remote conditioning effects, indicating a superior local interaction with the underlying tissue. Hence we were able to manage superficial burns using cyclic NPWT successfully however it needs large scale randomized trials for application in clinical practice.

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Need for more Clinical Training for Improving the Fifth Vital Signs Assessment Skill of Oncology Nurses

Rajendra Kumar Sahu¹, Avadhesh Kumar Yadav², Meena K Krishnan³, Raman P⁴

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Abstract

Pain is a subjective feeling, and there are no physical tools or instruments available to measure pain. Pain assessment in the clinical setting is a crucial step in the management of pain in inpatient as well as outpatients setting. Pain is accepted as a fifth vital sign in the healthcare setting, like other vital signs, pain can not be measured by any instrument because of a subjective nature as other vital signs are objective in nature. Adequate and accurate assessment and documentation, and thereupon management of pain ensures that each and every patient, from acute to chronic illnesses including terminal ill patients, has benefitted from efficacious pain-relieving measures. It has been estimated that 18 million people globally have cancer pain, and in that proportion, approximately 60% to 90% of the pain is caused by advanced tumors and 30% caused by mild and/or moderate tumors that can be treated by medical surgical or other therapy. Pain is classified as nociceptive and neuropathic based on the fundamental pathophysiology of pain. Assessment of pain can be done in three ways, Self-report, Behavioural how the patient behaves, and Physiological clinical observations.

Conclusion: Pain is a worldwide health issue. Pain assessment & Management requires the attention of health professionals. Pain is one of the most common under evaluated vital signs in the health care sector. Under evaluation causes, discomfort to the patient as well as psychiatric problems, Better evaluation of pain stimulates good therapeutic management of it which improves the quality of life among patients pain assessment & management is complex, there are varieties of factors that affect pain assessment and management services thus a deeper understanding of the barriers and overcoming to this barrier is required for proper and effective pain management services.

Keywords: Pain Assessment; Pain; Pain management; Fifth Vital Sign.

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INTRODUCTION

Pain is a subjective feeling, and there are no physical tools or instruments available to measure pain. Pain is whatever they felt by individuals, say it as like as felt by them, and where ever they experience pain.¹ Pain assessment in the clinical setting is a crucial step in the management of pain in inpatient as well as outpatients setting. In the health care sector, nurses have a notable role and responsibility in the assessment of pain, undoubtedly nurses perform it better because they have more association with the patients as well as

their families in the hospital as well as community.²

Pain is accepted as a fifth vital sign in the healthcare setting, like other vital signs, pain can not be measured by any instrument because of a subjective nature as other vital signs are objective in nature. Adequate and accurate assessment and documentation, and thereupon management of pain ensures that each and every patient, from acute to chronic illnesses including terminal ill patients, has benefitted from efficacious pain-relieving measures.³

CANCER AND PAIN

Pain is a usual symptom in patients diagnosed with any type of cancer patients. There are no doubts that it is usually a feared symptom, and thought to be linked with distress and inability. It has been estimated that 18 million people globally have cancer pain, and in that proportion, approximately 60% to 90% of the pain is caused by advanced tumors and 30% caused by mild and/or moderate tumors that can be treated by medical surgical or other therapy.³

As per WHO data, Cancers are the major cause of morbidity and mortality globally, accounting for 18.1 million new occurrences and 9.6 million deaths in 2018. It is a remarkably raising burden on patients as well as families, communities, and health services.

Pain is encountered by 55% of patients receiving anti-cancer treatment such as chemotherapy, radiation therapy, or surgery and 66% of patients diagnosed with an advanced, metastatic, or terminal disease experience pain.

Cancer pain is mainly caused by the growth of tumors or destroying nearby tissue, pressure on nerves, bones, or organs, and chemicals released from tumors. Another cause of pain in cancer patients is oncological treatments, such as surgery, radiation, chemotherapy, and various diagnostic as well as a therapeutic procedure such as biopsy, frequent IV cannulation, and major or minor surgical procedures.

The pain felt by cancer is generally round the clock in nature. The quality of life may be improved by better management of pain. Better pain management can improve better sleeping at night which makes them more energetic during the day. Improving activity may also decrease the risk of ailments such as pneumonia, pressure sores, blood clots, and various types of infections, which are linked to immobilization of patients due to pain.

The basics of pain management in an oncology setup are regular medication, including antipyretics (acetaminophen) and opioid drugs. Appropriate selection of drug ensures the safety of patients and minimizes side effects of the drug.

TYPES OF PAIN

Pain is classified as nociceptive and neuropathic based on the fundamental pathophysiology of pain.

The Nociceptive pain transmits from nociceptor response to noxious stimuli, that may be found in the superficial tissues, or in the deep tissues (Called somatic pain). It may also occur in the visceral organs (Called visceral Pain). Superficial somatic pain is produced by external factors which may be the mechanical cause, chemical cause, or thermal cause such as surgery, burns, abrasions, cuts, contusions, injections, or dermatological problems causing injury. Deep somatic pain may be stimulated by mechanical injury, inflammation, or ischemia. When the pain occurs in the visceral organ called visceral pain. Some examples of visceral pain in oncology include cancer of gastrointestinal organs such as the stomach, gall bladder, intestine liver, genitourinary cancer, cancer of the bladder, ureter, prostate, and inner genital organ.

Neuropathic pain is also known as pathologic pain, this type of pain may be caused by injury and impairment of the central (Brain & Spinal cord) or Peripherally distributed nerves (peripheral nervous systems). This produces abnormal pain stimulus which can cause diffuse pain, this characteristic makes it difficult to recognize the source such as diabetic neuropathy, neuralgia, phantom limb pain, post-stroke, or autoimmune disorders.

Based on duration, Pain is classified as acute or chronic

Acute pain – It comes suddenly and is generally sharp in nature, it is mostly caused by a specific factor, pain caused by diagnostic and therapeutics in the oncology sector are an example of acute pain. Acute pains last less than 3 months to 6 months.

Chronic pain persists beyond the expected course of acute pain. Chronic pain disrupts the work pattern of the individual as well as activities of daily living and sleeping quality. Identification of fundamental pathophysiology presence and/or extent of chronic pain is a difficult task for healthcare personnel. There are some other factors such as psychological that are not associated with the cause of pain but affect the nature of pain. Chronic pain may exist without physiologic signs and it can be continuous

or periodic, with or without acute exacerbations. When an acute pain episode comes from a chronic disorder, called "breakthrough pain."

Challenges and need more clinical training

Appropriate assessment and management of pain is a challenging task for nurses employed in an oncologic setting. Appropriate management of the pain is necessary because it distresses the patient, due to frequent diagnostic and therapeutic procedures. Follow-up assessment is also a key phase assessment for the patient to ensure them pain-free living in a home as well as society. Nurses should be clinically competent in recognition or identification of the "pain hints" given by patients. Undoubtedly, assessment of pain hints is also not easy work because patients and health care people may have varieties of perceptions of pain.

It is known that despite advances in the clinical setting, pain is still a poorly evaluated issue and intermittently underestimated by health care professionals. Inadequate knowledge and clinical competency to assess pain are major and frequent obstacles observed in pain management services another barrier to adequate pain assessment and management concerns about opioid adverse effects, and the fear of drug addiction (dependence).³ Numerous published sources suggest that health care workers' knowledge and attitudes in terms of pain is lacking that causing undertreatment of pain.⁴ HCPs have misconceptions & myths regarding the pain that impedes satisfactory pain management.⁴ Lacking pain management knowledge is not the single factor that affects patients' well-being but perceptions and satisfaction about pain management followed post-surgery patients were also found low.⁴ In-Service Education Program on Nurses' Knowledge and Attitudes towards Pain

Management showed improved knowledge and attitude towards pain management.⁵ Another study indicates that staff nurses have poor knowledge and negative attitudes about pain assessment and management which affects patient pain control measures.⁶ To overcome the barrier of pain assessment, nurses need to be clinically competent in the assessment and management of pain.

Inclusion of pain as vital signs

In 2000, an organization named the Joint Commission on Accreditation of Health Care Organizations (J.C.A.H.O) had recommended including pain as a vital sign. The organization suggested that pain should be assessed and documented with all vital signs, they validated it as the fifth vital sign.

WAYS TO ASSESS PAIN

Assessment of pain can be done in three ways, Self-report, Behavioural how the patient behaves, and Physiological clinical observations.

There are different scales available for the assessment of pain, the numeric scale, the Wong-Baker scale (also known as the FACES scale), and The FLACC scale is most commonly recommended for pain assessment.

In the clinical area, Numeric Scale is a widely applied pain scale in adult patients, it is a type of rating scale which includes a rating of pain on a scale ranging from 0 to 10. In this scale, nurses ask the patient for a verbal reply to the question, this scale provides a more accurate result with the visual analog scale. This scale may be applied to the conscious patient who can reply verbally and patients minimum having 9 years of age and older.⁷

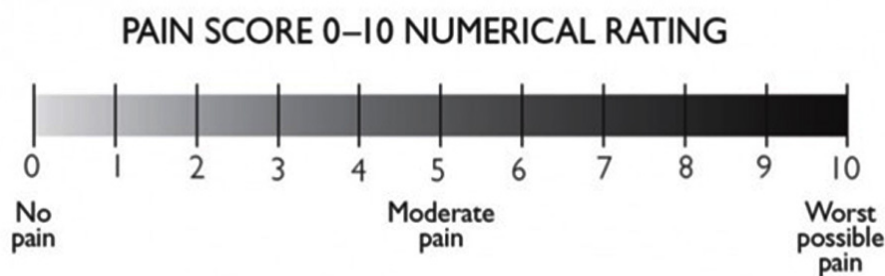


Fig. 1: Pain assessment numeric scale

Source: https://www.physio-pedia.com/Numeric_Pain_Rating_Scale

The Wong-Baker FACES Scale is used by observing the facial expression of the patient. The facial expression is linked with numbers as mentioned on a scale that is ranged from 0 to 10. This scale is

generally applied on children. This scale is thought to be appropriate for patients ages three and older. This scale is also used for adults who have developmental or communication challenges.⁷

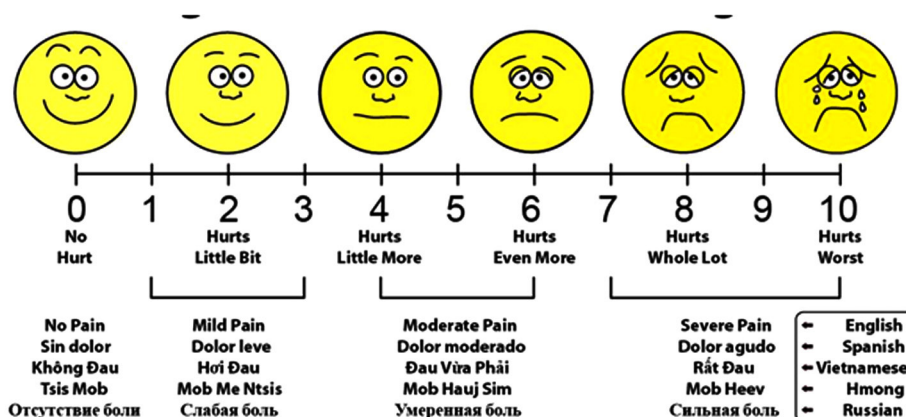


Fig. 2: Wong Bakers Scale

Source: <https://www.ahutton.com/cgw/pain-scale-options.htm>

FLACC scale is based on observation of behaviors, and it is generally used in pediatric patients less than three years of age and patients who can not report themselves.

The full name of FLACC is Face, Legs, Activity, Cry, and Consolability. In this scale behaviors that

are explained are linked with a number; each unit is computed, in this scale pain score is displayed in a number ranging from 0 to 10. This scale is also recommended for developmentally delayed patients and patients who have cognitive impairment.⁷

FLACC Scale ²		0	1	2
1	Face	No particular expression or smile.	Occasional grimace or frown, withdrawn, disinterested.	Frequent to constant frown, clenched jaw, quivering chin.
2	Legs	Normal position or relaxed.	Uneasy, restless, tense.	Kicking, or legs drawn up.
3	Activity	Lying quietly, normal position, moves easily.	Squirming, shifting back and forth, tense.	Arched, rigid or jerking.
4	Cry	No crying (awake or asleep).	Moans or whimpers; occasional complaint.	Crying steadily, screams or sobs, frequent complaints.
5	Consolability	Content, relaxed.	Reassured by occasional touching, hugging or being talked to, distractible.	Difficult to console or comfort.

Fig. 3: FLACC Scale

Source: <https://healthjade.net/flacc-scale/>

A large number of a patient diagnosed with cancer, encounter anxiety and depression, therefore, the aim of pain management in a cancer patient should be a focus on the patient's comfort and function while preventing unwanted adverse effects from medications.⁸

PHYSIOLOGICAL INDICATORS

Some physiological indicators may alter by pain perception

- Elevation of Heart rate

- Shifting of Respiratory rate and pattern from normal ie: increase, decrease, or change pattern
- Elevation of Blood pressure
- Reduction of Oxygen saturation⁹

But it is thought that physiological indicators alone cannot be applied as a measurement tool for assessing pain. A tool that includes physical, behavioral, and self-report should be preferred when possible. However, in certain conditions, such as mechanically ventilated patients and patients on sedation, physiological indicators (hints) of pain can be useful to evaluate a patient's feeling of pain.

CONCLUSION

Pain is a world wide health issue. Pain assessment & Management requires the attention of health professionals. Pain is one of the most common under-evaluated vital signs in the health care sector. Under evaluation causes, discomfort to the patient as well as psychiatric problems, Better evaluation of pain stimulates good therapeutic management of it which improves the quality of life among patients Pain assessment & management is complex, there are varieties of factors that affect pain assessment and management services thus a deeper understanding of the barriers and overcoming to this barrier is required for proper and effective pain management services. The barrier needs to be addressed to remedy the deficiencies among HCPs and improve the quality of patient care.

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