

XXXV CICLO - Anno Accademico 2021/2022

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Titolo tesi: Nursing management of enteral and urinary Stoma in adults: from guidelines to specific issues in clinical practice

ABSTRACT

An ostomy creation is a common procedure, performed by surgeons as part of the treatment for both benign and malignant diseases. Ostomy is the way to eliminate faeces or urine from the body, without control. Sometimes negative psychological effects on patients are inevitable, but, for some other patients stoma represent an effective solution for certain problems caused by trauma or disease. However, enteral or urological stomas can be associated to complications that can cause problems in patient daily life. Although surgical techniques are increasingly evolved, peristomal complications are reported and they vary from 10% to 70%. Of the 70,000 people with a stoma in Italy, it's estimated that at least 15%-43% suffers of skin complications in peristomal area.

It has been demonstrated that such skin complications interfere with patients' quality of life.^{1,2}

Several studies have been conducted over the years regarding complications of the ostomy complex, mainly related to their factors risk. Results of these studies are variable and the incidence rate of complications varies from 20% to 70%.^{3,4}

Salvadalea g. and Malik et al. highlighted incoherencies in terms of definitions and measurements of stoma complications. This represent a great limitation to establishing evidence.⁵

Other studies show that adequate stoma care significantly improves outcomes and may decrease hospital readmission and emergency surgery rates.⁶ However, data from the literature on several aspects of stoma care management are extensive but extremely nonhomogeneous.

Therefore, in this field, national scientific societies has emphasized on necessity of a clear and a comprehensive evidence-based knowledge and/or best practice, through the experience of expert stoma care nurses and the other specialist involved (surgeons, urologists, dermatologists, psychologists, etc.).

For this reason a multiprofessional and multidisciplinary research group are set up, to seek all scientific knowledges necessary to support clinical recommendations about professional behaviour for nurses dealing with stoma complications.

Of main topics identified, the paucity of literature about the management of sexuality needs among patients with stoma and about valid, reliable and easy-to-use tools for assessment and monitoring peristomal lesions,^{7,8,9} moved the work group to establish following aim.

The aims of this work consist of: **a)** providing practice recommendations for the nursing aspects of the management and care of enteral and urinary stomas in adult patients; **b)** developing, testing and validating a new peristomal skin

lesion assessment tool; c) assessing the role of sexuality among stoma patients and investigating relatives knowledge among healthcare professionals.

About first study, all identified articles for each topic was analyzed, overall it was examined pertinent, bias and evidence. According to the GRADE system, results permitted to define 19 raccomandations in form of statements, of which, 2 are relative to preoperative care and 17 are relative to nursing care management of some stoma complications. For two statement the level of scientific evidence was high (strong raccomandation) but for other statement same level was low because no experimental or analytical clinical studies were conducted (GRADE 2C or NO GRADE). For these statements, a consensus conference was held with all stakeholders in the field of stoma care management for expert members to classify statement as “no grade - expert opinion”.

About second study, to compare validity of PLS with the most widely used peristomal tool in Italy a the new tool was designed by a team of experts, focusing on patients' demographics, clinical characteristics, and lesion classification by severity and topography. The results of this comparative validation study indicate that the PLS proved more accurate describing and measuring, discriminating lesions by their severity because of its level of detail, using a standardised terminology and its completeness. The PLS is a valid tool for monitoring the peristomal skin area, and for repeating comparative assessments throughout the follow-up process in daily stomaltherapist care.

About third study, two surveys are addressed to patients with stoma and to stomatherapists. The surveys are distributed among all Italian Regions. A total of 457 valid surveys from patients with stoma were included. The 40% of patients had a definitive colostomy. The 85% of cases referred a good health status and 71% was autonomous in the ostomy management. Sexual activity was defined “important” in 80% and 68% patients before and after surgery, respectively.

Presence of stoma influenced sexual activity in 22.5% patients. This study demonstrated the major issues of stoma patients about sexual function and the difficulty and embarrassment of professionals to talking about sexuality.

KEYWORDS

ostomates, ostomy, peristomal skin assessment, scale development, validation study