

Significant Cost Savings Realized by Changing Debridement Protocol

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Message:

Debriding all necrotic and nonviable tissue is the first step in wound bed preparation. Hard, dry eschar is most frequently removed from a wound using sharp debridement. Soft eschar and slough can be removed enzymatically, mechanically, and by autolytic debridement. The enzyme collagenase ointment (Santyl®) has been the mainstay of our protocol for debridement. Recently, hypochlorous acid (Vashe® Wound Solution), has been reported to be effective at soft debridement when used as a wound soak followed by wiping of the wound. We conducted a trial comparing the use of Santyl alone versus soaking the wound with hypochlorous acid before applying the enzyme.

Methods:

For the control group, patient and wound demographics were collected for 3 months on all wounds treated with our standard protocol for debridement, consisting of sharp debridement for all dry, hard eschar and/or daily application of Santyl for soft eschar, debris, and slough. Once all necrotic and nonviable tissue had been removed, advanced wound dressings were used as indicated. The amount and daily costs of the Santyl were determined for each wound. Following collection of the control data, a 3-month trial was performed with the following modification. Once sharp debridement (if indicated) was completed, Vashe Wound Solution was applied to each wound; a soaked gauze was applied once a day and left in place for 10 minutes. The solution then wiped off and the Santyl ointment applied to the wound the same as in the control group.

Results:

The cost for those patients treated only with Santyl was \$1,521 per patient or \$775 per treated wound. The cost of enzymatic debriding for patients where hypochlorous acid was used before the enzymatic debriding agent was \$400 per patient or \$335 per treated wound.

Table 1. Institutional expenditures for agents used to facilitate debridement

	Control period	Trial period
Patients (N)	26	36
Wounds (N)	51	43
Expenditure for enzyme	\$39,544.16	\$14,410.16
Expenditure for Vashe	na	\$878.40
Cost Santyl per patient	\$1,521	\$400
Cost Santyl per wound	\$775	\$335
Cost Vashe per patient	na	\$24
Cost Vashe per wound	na	\$20
Total debridement cost per patient	\$1,521	\$424
Total debridement cost per wound	\$775	\$355



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