Use of a Superabsorbent Dressing to Control Copious Drainage in Patients with Venous Ulcerations

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**CLINICAL PROBLEM**
Cost-effective wound management must take into account the cost of dressings, time to healing and provider visits. This is especially true in the home health arena as well as patients being served by providers under a capitated reimbursement or managed care system. Uncontrolled exudate squanders resources, add to increased morbidity, and impacts wound healing. Patients report failure of absorbent wound dressings and resort to products not formulated for wound care, such as baby diapers with or without the usual absorbent dressings.

**REFERENCEs**

**METHOD**
A case series of six patients with copious amounts of drainage and history of periwound adhesive related skin injury requiring three times a day using silicone based foam dressings, were placed on a superabsorbent non-adhesive dressing for one month. Patients continued with their compression requirements and lymphedema therapy treatments. Evaluation endpoints included the number of dressing changes, pain, and periwound skin condition.

**RESULTS**
All patients had a reduction in wound dressing changes to a maximum of once daily. (Mean 1.9 days; range 1-3 days) Improved periwound maceration was observed in two patients and resolved in four. Three patients reported no wound pain on removal with three reporting a 90% reduction. All patients were able to maintain compression and lymphedema therapy requirements. There were no episodes of periwound adhesive denudations.

**CONCLUSION**
Use of a superabsorbent non-adhesive wound dressing can reduce costs to home-health agencies, providers in capitated management systems and patients whose dressings are not covered under their insurance as dressing frequencies are reduced. Other potential cost savings can be achieved with prevention of periwound maceration and trauma. Further study is warranted.

**PRODUCT NOTATION**
*Allevyn Gentle Border, Smith & Nephew, Key Largo, Florida
** Mepilex Border, Molnlycke Healthcare, Norcross, Georgia
*** Optilock, Medline Industries, Mundelein, Illinois