

Consensus Statements Published Regarding the Assessment, Prevention and Treatment of Medical Adhesive-Related Skin Injuries

Interdisciplinary team identifies new protocols for medical adhesive products used in clinical practice

Medical adhesives play a critical role in patient care, as they are used by virtually every medical specialty in all care settings and among all age groups. Yet despite their meaningful impact to healthcare delivery, little guidance exists to date regarding appropriate selection and proper use of adhesive products to minimize medical adhesive-related skin injury (MARSİ). MARSİ has become a prevalent but under recognized complication that is believed to impact at least 1.5 million patients annually in the U.S.,^{1,2} contributing to significant costs per incident.

In an effort to address the gap, a consensus document was published this month from 23 recognized key opinion leaders who convened to explore the assessment, prevention and treatment of MARSİ. The thought leaders across multiple medical disciplines gathered in December 2012 for a two-day roundtable discussion based in St. Paul, Minn. The summit was made possible by an unrestricted educational grant from 3M Critical & Chronic Care Solutions. The document is titled “Medical Adhesives and Patient Safety: State of the Science: Consensus Statements for the Assessment, Prevention, and Treatment of Adhesive-related Skin Injuries”, and appears in the July/August issue of the *Journal of Wound Ostomy & Continence Nursing*.

The document details 24 consensus statements and suggests additional areas for research. Among its key points:

Expert opinion suggests that choosing the right adhesive products and using proper application techniques can help minimize MARSİ.
It is recommended that clinicians consider the role of skin tension and anticipate skin and joint movement when selecting and applying medical adhesive products.
Expert opinion recommends that adhesive-containing products be stored and used in a manner that prevents contamination, and that single-patient-use products are used whenever possible.

Specialties represented at the summit funded by 3M included critical care; dermatology; electrophysiology; geriatrics; infection control; infusion therapy; neonatology; oncology; orthopedics; pediatrics; perioperative; physical therapy; plastics; research; and wound, ostomy and continence. Researchers in the area of skin and wound care, including pressure ulcers, were also among the invited participants.

The event was moderated by Mikel Gray, PhD, who co-authored the document. Dr. Gray is editor-in-chief of the *Journal of Wound, Ostomy and Continence Nursing*; professor and nurse practitioner at University of Virginia-Charlottesville; and past president of both the Society of Urologic Nurses and Associates (SUNA) and Certification Board for Urologic Nurses and Associates (CBUNA).

Medical adhesives are a component of a variety of products including tapes, dressings, electrodes, ostomy supplies and patches. They provide securement for both critical and noncritical devices and products, facilitate skin protection and healing, and allow noninvasive monitoring.

3M’s unmatched leadership in adhesives – the company introduced masking tape in 1925 – led to the debut of the first hypoallergenic surgical tape in 1960. Today 3M offers a full line of proprietary medical tapes. Product overviews and additional information is available through the [Medical Tapes](#) section of the 3M Health Care website.

“As the industry leader in medical adhesives we feel it is important to help drive understanding of the impact of medical adhesives on patient care,” said Bill Cruise, vice president and general manager, 3M Critical & Chronic Care Solutions. “This effort has been a productive and substantive coming together of a diverse group of experts with common goals. We’ve welcomed the opportunity to support such an effort.”

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