

# The Effectiveness of an Enzyme Alginogel in the Management of Infected Incontinence Associated Dermatitis

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## Introduction

Incontinence Associated Dermatitis (IAD) is a common form of contact dermatitis that is associated with constant exposure of the skin to urinary and faecal incontinence. It causes considerable discomfort and can be difficult, time consuming and expensive to treat. It is more prevalent in faecal incontinence; as the faeces contain biolytic (lipid-digesting) and proteolytic (protein-digesting) enzymes that cause the skin damage. This disrupts the skin's natural defence barrier against bacteria as the skin shifts to an alkaline pH state which increases the risk of infection<sup>(1)</sup>.

The exact prevalence figures for individuals who experience IAD remain unknown, potentially due to the differences in care settings studied, methods to assess the presence of IAD and the differences in reporting mechanisms. With this in mind, it is estimated that prevalence ranges from 5.6 - 50% across healthcare settings<sup>(2)</sup>.

## Method

This case study involves a 64 year old male with a complex medical history of Malignant Neoplasm of the Kidney, Ascites, Duodenal ulcer, Hypertension, Vagotomy, Pyloroplasty and Neuropathy. The patient had general limited mobility and could only walk for short distances with use of a walking aid.

The patient developed infected Incontinence Associated Dermatitis to both buttocks and his sacrum, with dermal tissue loss to a depth of 1.5cm in some areas. The deeper areas of skin loss became sloughy, malodorous and extremely painful; necessitating the need to discontinue his immunosuppressant therapy for a period of six weeks. During this episode various conventional dressings had been instigated, including hydrocolloids and hydrogel sheets; coupled with antibiotic therapy.

The District Nurses' aims were to promote autolytic debridement, to reduce the bioburden and facilitate the growth of healthy granulation tissue; devitalised tissue acts as a barrier to healing and a source of nutrient for bacteria and its elimination will ultimately reduce the risk of infection. Consideration was also given to the need for exudate management and finally pain control was essential for patient comfort and to aid compliance of the advised treatment plan.

The wound management plan instigated by the District Nurse encompassed the use of an Enzyme Alginogel, Flaminal<sup>®</sup> Hydro, antimicrobial primary dressing; which is indicated for slightly to moderate exuding wounds and contains less alginate than that of its sister product Flaminal<sup>®</sup> Forte. Flaminal<sup>®</sup> Hydro facilitates debridement of devitalised tissue by means of creating an optimum moist wound healing environment, which in turn facilitates the regeneration of healthy granulation tissue. In addition, it combats and reduces the risk of infection by means of its scientifically proven antimicrobial properties. Furthermore, the Flaminal<sup>®</sup> product range has gathered substantial clinical evidence to support its recognised soothing ability in the management of painful wounds.

A secondary silicone foam was applied to support protection of the fragile tissue and absorbency.

## Result

The District Nurse noted a vast improvement within 3 days of commencing the advised management plan; facilitating the commencement of the patient's immunosuppressant treatment. Complete debridement of the devitalised tissue was evident and elimination of wound malodour was also accomplished. Flaminal<sup>®</sup> Hydro reduced the excoriation and its effective soothing ability supported a decrease in pain severity.

The patient had suffered for over six weeks with an infected, stagnant, problematic incontinence associated dermatitis skin condition. However, after only nine days of commencing the Flaminal<sup>®</sup> Hydro treatment, complete wound healing was achieved.

## Discussion

Incontinence Associated Dermatitis is a significant challenge worldwide and is a well recognised risk factor for pressure ulcer development<sup>(1)</sup>.

There are an estimated 14 million people in the UK with urinary incontinence and 6.5 million with bowel problems<sup>(3)</sup>. There are currently no specific guidelines for the management of IAD.

## Conclusion

This case study demonstrates the effectiveness of Flaminal<sup>®</sup> Hydro as an antimicrobial agent that supports wound healing by promoting debridement and managing exudate levels whilst optimising a moist wound healing environment. It also highlights its ability to support pain management, with its soothing capacity, in the instance of painful wounds.

The District Nurse concluded that the implementation of the advised wound management plan proved invaluable, as the patient had initially been very low in mood, embarrassed by his skin condition and had expressed his concerns that the IAD would persist without a successful outcome. He was extremely satisfied with the rapid healing achieved using the Flaminal<sup>®</sup> Hydro primary dressing.

As a result of this case study, the District Nursing team involved now recommend Flaminal<sup>®</sup> as the first line treatment for moisture related skin damage and IAD.

## References

1. Wounds International (2015) Best Practice Principles. Incontinence Associated Dermatitis: Moving Prevention Forward [www.woundsinternational.com](http://www.woundsinternational.com)
2. Woo KY, Beekman D & Chakravarthy D (2017) Management of Moisture-Associated Skin Damage: A scoping review. *Advances in Skin & Wound Care* 30 (11) 494-501.
3. Millions 'Suffer In Silence' With Incontinence, <https://www.bladderandbowel.org/news/millions-suffer-in-silence-with-incontinence/>



Day 1



Day 7



Day 10