NHS
Suffolk and
North East Essex
Integrated Care Board

Position Statement: Prescribing of Waterproof Covers and Shower Protection Pouches

The Suffolk and North East Essex (SNEE) Integrated Care Board (ICB) DOES NOT support the prescribing of waterproof covers or shower protection pouches.

There is insufficient evidence to demonstrate the clinical effectiveness of these products.

Waterproof Limb Covers

- SNEE ICB does **NOT** support the prescribing of waterproof limb covers for plaster casts.
- When worn on a lower limb, waterproof limb covers are associated with safety concerns around slips and falls.
- There is no evidence to demonstrate the clinical effectiveness of waterproof limb covers for air walker boots.
- Patients should be advised to contact their specialist to discuss whether it is safe to temporarily remove the limb from immobilisation for washing.
- Product examples include Bloccs®, LimbO®, Seal-Tight® and BUDDY®

PICC and Hickman Lines

- SNEE ICB does **NOT** support the prescribing of waterproof limb covers or drainage bags for PICC or Hickman lines as there is limited evidence to demonstrate clinical effectiveness.
- Swimming or bathing should only be undertaken following consultation with a specialist, who can determine the most appropriate waterproof dressing to be prescribed.
- NICE guidance recommends the use of a transparent, semi-permeable membrane dressing in the prevention of healthcare associated infections for PICC lines.
- In usual circumstances it is considered best practice to apply a showerproof film dressing with a non-adherent island or gauze swab.

Haemodialysis and Peritoneal Catheters

- SNEE ICB does **NOT** support the prescribing of shower protection pouches and auxiliary products (such as barrier film wipes and adhesive remover sprays) for patients on dialysis as there is insufficient evidence to demonstrate clinical effectiveness in minimising risk of infection in this group of patients.
- Requests to prescribe shower protection pouches should be declined.
- Patients undergoing dialysis are at increased risk of infection, which can be heightened by inadequate care of the dialysis catheter. It is therefore essential that the exit site is dressed and managed appropriately to reduce the risk of exit site infection.
- The dressings around the insertion and exit sites of the catheter must be kept dry at all times. Patients are advised to avoid showering until the wound has healed and stitches are no longer present.
- Patients should be advised to contact their dialysis specialist for further advice on managing their exit site.

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Patient information: Haemodialysis Catheters

- Patients should not swim.
- Patients should not touch or remove the existing exit site dressing applied by their dialysis nurse.
- It is possible to take a shallow bath or an all over wash with a dialysis line in place. However, patients must prevent the dialysis line from being immersed or soaked in water as this increases the risk of bacteria entering the exit site, which may cause an infection.
- Patients should **NOT** use shower protection pouches as these can pull off the exit site dressing on removal, leaving the exit site unprotected.
- Patients should be advised to contact their dialysis specialist for further advice on managing their exit site.

Patient information: Peritoneal Dialysis (PD) Catheters

- Patients should be advised to keep the exit site as dry as possible, therefore submersion in water is not recommended.
- Patients do not need to cover the exit site when showering.
- Dialysis specialists should be able to offer patients training in dressings changes as required after showering.
- The use of shower protection pouches is **NOT** supported by SNEE ICB.
- Patients should be advised to contact their dialysis specialist for further advice on managing their exit site.

Useful Contacts

- PALS (Patient Advice and Liaison Service)

  pals@snee.nhs.uk or 0800 389 6819
- SNEE ICB Medicines Management Appliances Nurses

  Medicines.optimisation.nurses@snee.nhs.uk

References

- The PrescQIPP PROP-List (Products to Review for Optimised Prescribing)
- Healthcare-associated infections: prevention and control in primary and community care (nice.org.uk)
- SWL Position Statement on Prescribing Shower Protection Pouches