

## Stoma Related Wounds of the Body and Mind – The Nursing Perspective

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### Introduction

The field of stoma care is of immense importance to Nursing Personnel. An individual with stoma undergoes a change with wide range of adjustments affecting his physical, social and psychological state of well being. Stoma patients have to face big challenges in life. The care given to a patient with stoma can have an immense impact on the quality of his life. The objective of the study was to identify the problems related to stoma and determine the issues related to quality of life in stoma patients.

### Methodology

The study has been carried out on 30 patients (Mean age-35 years) with either colostomy or ileostomy over a period of 3 months in a tertiary care hospital in New Delhi. Stoma related complications were analyzed either during the period of hospitalization or follow up in the out patient department.

### Observations

Of the sample studied, 33% patients had skin related problems (excoriation, redness, itching etc.) at some point of time after stoma surgery. The length of time since stoma formation ranged from few days to 1 ½ years. 17% population studied expressed no problem related to stoma while 10% cases presented with leak and 3% cases presented with perforation, incisional hernia, bowel herniation etc. 80% female and 60% male population under study had BMI value less than 18.5 suggestive of their under weight

status as per WHO criteria.

80% population under study had positive feelings about their body image, while 17% did not feel good about themselves. 3% of the population studied could not relate it to body image owing to their lack of ability to comprehend. 56% respondents had adjustment problems with the family and almost all respondents under study felt dependent on others especially the primary care giver i.e. spouse.

There are adjustment problems within the family and society as there is a stigma attached to it. Lack of knowledge and low level of comprehension owing to poor educational status amongst patients regarding the outcome of illness adds to their existing problems. Due to their low socio economic status, most patients are unable to afford high cost colostomy care appliances.

### Recommendations

There is a need to train nurses that recognize the actual needs of such patients and maintain stoma care. A good communication network should be developed and proper guidance should be provided to decrease their potential problems. Patient and care givers need to be involved in different aspects of patient teaching about stoma management with special emphasis on teaching primary care giver. The health care delivery system should be designed and strengthened in a manner so as to provide comprehensive care and education to such patients to help them deal with stoma & cope better with issues related to quality of life.