A NEW THERAPEUTIC APPROACH IN THE TREATMENT OF HAILEY-HAILEY DISEASE BY USING POLYMERIC MEMBRANE DRESSINGS*

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INTRODUCTION
Familial benign pemphigus also called Hailey-Hailey disease is a rare hereditary blistering skin disease. It typically begins as a painful erosive skin rash at sites of friction that may become thickened, cracked and macerated. There is no cure and treatment is symptomatic. Polymeric membrane dressings (PMD) have been used with unexpected positive results on two cases. We will describe our findings with the hope that more patients with this condition have the chance to expand their limited choice of treatments.

AIM
We wanted to look at the;
• Improvement on quality of life
• Reduction of pain
• Effective odor and exudate management,
• Greatest possible independence.
• Improvement of sleep
• Wound healing and maintaining a stable skin situation.
• Reduced risk of recurrence.

METHOD
Two women with severe long standing skin lesions caused by Hailey-Hailey have been included. They applied the PMD themselves with daily changes, using hydrocolloid strips or silicone tape as fixation. Both patients reported cracked dry wound edges so these were covered by a zinc based barrier creme.

Dietary recommendations as well as a stress free environment was recommended as it is a well known fact that these factors can exacerbate the lesions.

RESULTS
Patient 1 had large painful lesions under her armpits. She saw a dramatic improvement with reduction of itching and pain within a week, 5 weeks later the lesions had completely resolved. She has continued to use PMD on new lesions and reports that this is the first dressing that has managed to stop the deterioration after a few days. This patient followed her diet restrictions very thoroughly, she was also the one that had the fastest results when it came to healing. Patient 2 had multiple lesions on various body sites. During the first weeks use of PMD there was an increase of lymphatic fluid from her lesions, this normalized after 10 days. Photos taken after 2 months show a huge improvement of all lesions. Both patient reported a dramatically improved sleep situation, waking only 2-3 times per night instead of several times per hour.

Both women reported a reduction of odor and considerably cleaner granulating wounds after a few days.

DISCUSSION
It is exciting to be able to offer patients with this condition an alternative treatment regime to corticosteroids. Improvement was seen on both patients, ideally we would like to include more patients but as this condition is so rare that will take time to find them.

Both patients make sure they have PMD at home, ready to use as soon as new blistering lesions occur. Pat 1 is especially happy over this solution as her lesions now resolve in a matter of days instead of months.

Bibliography
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3. PMD in the Management of Neonates and Infants with Severe Forms of Epidermolysis Bullosa. Jacqueline Denyer. Poster EWWA 2010

*PolyMem® Wound Dressings with and without Silver. Manufactured by Ferriis Mfg. 5333 Northeast Parkway, Fort Worth, TX 76106, USA. This case study was unsponsored.