

SWL Position Statement on Prescribing Shower Protection Pouches

Summary

NHS South West London (SWL) and SWL Renal specialists do not support the routine prescribing of shower protection pouches and auxiliary products for patients on dialysis due to a lack of evidence and increased risk of infection.

Rationale

- Patients undergoing dialysis are at an increased risk of infections and this can be heightened by inadequate care of the dialysis catheter.
- Catheters are crucial to dialysis so there are strict guidelines in place for their use and care, including how the exit site is dressed to help avoid exit site infections.
- The dressings around the insertion and exit sites of the line must always be kept dry.
- Patients are advised not to have a shower until the wound heals and the stitches are completely dissolved or removed.
- There is a lack of evidence to support the use of shower protection pouches in minimising risk of infection in patients undergoing dialysis.

Guidance for clinicians:

- GPs are recommended not to prescribe any shower protection pouches and auxiliary products for dialysis patients.
- Review and stop all patients that have been prescribed a shower protection pouch e.g. Cath Dry Dressing, Independence easy access / wound protection /collection pouches, or LINC catheter shower pouches.
- Review and stop all auxiliary products prescribed alongside the shower protection pouches e.g. Independence No Sting Barrier Film wipes.
- If required, patients can be asked to seek further advice from their dialysis clinician or dialysis nurse at their regular appointments.
- Ensure that new and further prescriptions are not issued on a company's recommendation on behalf of a patient.

Guidance for patients, carers, and guardians:

- If you have been receiving shower protection pouches and auxiliary products on prescription, your GP may stop prescribing them for you. This is because of the lack of evidence and increased risk of infection.
- Your dialysis clinician will be able to review your individual catheter care requirements and be able to advise how best to look after your dialysis line.

The NHS belongs to you, use it responsibly.

References

1. [Nguyen, Duc B. et al. "Hemodialysis-Associated Infections." Chronic Kidney Disease, Dialysis, and Transplantation \(2019\): 389–410.e8. doi:10.1016/B978-0-323-52978-5.00025-2](#)

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