

CADTH RAPID RESPONSE REPORT: SUMMARY OF ABSTRACTS

Soaker Pads for Patients in Acute and Long-Term Care: Comparative Clinical Effectiveness and Cost

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Research Questions

1. What is the comparative clinical effectiveness of disposable underpads versus reusable underpads?
2. What is the cost-effectiveness of disposable underpads versus reusable underpads?

Key Findings

One randomized controlled trial was identified regarding the use of disposable underpads versus reusable underpads.

Methods

A limited literature search was conducted on key resources including PubMed, CINAHL, The Cochrane Library, University of York Centre for Reviews and Dissemination (CRD) databases and a focused Internet search. No methodological filters were applied to limit retrieval by publication type. The search was limited to English language documents published between January 1, 2012 and November 21, 2017. Internet links were provided, where available.

Selection Criteria

One reviewer screened citations and selected studies based on the inclusion criteria presented in Table 1.

Table 1: Selection Criteria

Population	Patients in acute and long-term care facilities, with or without bowel or urinary incontinence issues
Intervention	Disposable underpads (e.g., Ultrasorbs AP)
Comparator	Reusable underpads (e.g., Fusion)
Outcomes	Q1: Skin breakdown, improper wound healing, development of pressure ulcers; Q2: Cost-effectiveness
Study Designs	Health technology assessments, systematic reviews, meta-analyses, randomized controlled trials, non-randomized studies, economic evaluations

Results

Rapid Response reports are organized so that the higher quality evidence is presented first. Therefore, health technology assessment reports, systematic reviews, and meta-analyses are presented first. These are followed by randomized controlled trials, non-randomized studies, and economic evaluations.

One randomized controlled trial was identified regarding the use of disposable underpads versus reusable underpads. No relevant health technology assessments, systematic reviews, meta-analyses, non-randomized studies, or economic evaluations were identified.

Additional references of potential interest are provided in the appendix.

Overall Summary of Findings

One randomized controlled trial¹ was identified regarding the use of disposable underpads versus reusable underpads. The study included 462 patients; 252 were randomized to reusable underpads and 210 were randomized to disposable underpads. Hospital-acquired pressure injuries were observed to be significantly lower in the disposable underpad group. Rates of incontinence-associated dermatitis were not different between the two groups. Hospital length of stay was found to be lower in patients who used disposable underpads. The authors of the study concluded that disposable, absorbent incontinence pads should be considered when attempting to decrease pressure injuries.¹

References Summarized

Health Technology Assessments

No literature identified.

Systematic Reviews and Meta-analyses

No literature identified.

Randomized Controlled Trials

1. Francis K, Pang SM, Cohen B, Salter H, Homel P. Disposable versus reusable absorbent underpads for prevention of hospital-acquired incontinence-associated dermatitis and pressure injuries. *J Wound Ostomy Continence Nurs*. 2017 Jul;44(4):374-9.
[PubMed: PM28549048](#)

Non-Randomized Studies

No literature identified.

Economic Evaluations

No literature identified.

Appendix — Further Information

Previous CADTH Reports

2. Soaker pads for residents in long term care: clinical practice guidelines [Internet]. Ottawa: CADTH; 2017 Nov. [cited 2017 Nov 29] (CADTH rapid response report: summary of abstracts). Available from: <https://www.cadth.ca/soaker-pads-residents-long-term-care-clinical-evidence-and-guidelines-0>

Randomized Controlled Trials – Alternative Intervention

3. Twersky J, Montgomery T, Sloane R, Weiner M, Doyle S, Mathur K, et al. A randomized, controlled study to assess the effect of silk-like textiles and high-absorbency adult incontinence briefs on pressure ulcer prevention. *Ostomy Wound Manage.* 2012 Dec;58(12):18-24.
[PubMed: PM23221015](#).