



Myths and facts about convexity

What is a myth? A myth can be defined as a widely-held belief or idea that must be considered untrue based on the available evidence. In many cases myths are stories that allow a culture to continue to hold on to a particular belief, even if this belief is contradicted by evidence.

Myths influences us in subtle ways. If a myth is strong enough, it can be even influence how how personal experiences are interpreted. In a way, myths can change the way reality is perceived, in what is known as a “confirmation bias”. If, for instance, a certain treatment is believed to be the most effective, any supporting experience is likely to be considered as definite proof, ‘confirming’ the belief as true – even if the experience was really just an exception. On the other hand, if an experience contradicts popular belief, it will often simply be dismissed as being “the exception that proves the rules”

Of course, there is no doubt that, nurses should trust their experiences. It is, however, important that, the experience-based knowledge is considered together with all the evidence-based knowledge, where such scientific evidence exist. Why is this important for nurses? Because even with a high level of personal experience it will still be a subset of the total evidence for or against a given treatment or practice.

Together with the experts of Coloplast Global COF board, some common questions about convexity were discussed. Is there enough scientific clinical evidence to determine what beliefs are facts and which are myths? Where is there a need for more research?

How much do we really know about convexity?

How and when to use convex solutions?

There is very little solid research available on how and when to use convexity solutions¹. Despite the many convex solutions, leakage remains a critical issue and there is a need to learn more about convexity to make the best possible decisions.



Does convexity cause more pressure complications?

Even though this seems to make intuitive sense, the reality is that evidence is insufficient to document if convexity and pressure complications are related². More than three out of four Coloplast Ostomy Forum Experts agree that they had experienced no proof of a direct relation³.



Is convexity a poor choice for new ostomies?

Coloplast estimates that three out of four ostomy-operated patients level hospital with a flat adhesive³, but almost half of all patients eventually end up on a convex solution⁴. We don't know why some nurses are cautious in recommending a convex solution, but it might be out of concern about the increased risk of mucocutaneous separation. However, there is no evidence, research⁵ or practical experience among nurses in the Coloplast Ostomy Forum to confirm that risk³.



Can convex with a ring cause pressure complications?

Some scientific literature suggest that the addition of a ring to a traditional convex solution could cause 'intense pressure'¹ as this has been observed for 'some patients'. This matches with the feedback from Global COF experts, where half of the group had experienced this phenomenon³.

Does deep convex cause more pressure complications than light convex?

Evidence shows that a light convexity solution can actually place the same or more pressure on the skin compared to the traditional deep convex solutions⁷. Three out of four Coloplast Ostomy Forum experts agreed that deep convex doesn't necessarily cause more pressure complications than light convex³.



References

- ¹ Elaine Cronin, Senior Stoma Care Nurse, St. Mary's Hospital, London Gastrointestinal nursing no 6 no2 March 2008
- ² (Use of Convexity in Pouching A Comprehensive Review Jo Hoefl ok Julia Kittscha Paris Purnell) J Wound Ostomy Continence Nurs. 2012;40(5):506-512. Published by Lippincott Williams & Wilkins
- ³ Ostomy Life Study 2015/16 Review
- ⁴ Zeeberg 2015, Convexity data in the Coloplast CORE panel (Countries: UK, US, FR, DE). Data on file.
- ⁵ British Journal of Nursing, 2001, Vol 10, No 15, McKenzie and Ingram
- ⁶ Coloplast for Security, Marketing material, Coloplast – guidelines based on literature review & experience-based knowledge