TITLE:  Jewellery and the Risk of Bacteria Transmission from Healthcare Workers to Patients: Clinical Evidence

DATE:  31 January 2011

RESEARCH QUESTION

What is the clinical evidence that wearing hand and wrist jewellery can increase the risk of bacteria transmission from healthcare workers to patients?

KEY MESSAGE

Limited evidence is available regarding hand and wrist jewellery and the risk of bacteria transmission from healthcare workers to patients.

METHODS

A limited literature search was conducted on key health technology assessment resources, including PubMed, the Cochrane Library (Issue 1, 2011), University of York Centre for Reviews and Dissemination (CRD) databases, ECRI (Health Devices Gold), EuroScan, international health technology agencies, and a focused Internet search. The search was limited to English language articles published between January 1, 2006 and January 24, 2011. Filters were applied only to the focused Internet search to limit the retrieval to health technology assessments, systematic reviews, meta-analyses, randomized controlled trials and non-randomized studies. Internet links were provided, where available.

The summary of findings was prepared from the abstracts of the relevant information. Please note that data contained in abstracts may not always be an accurate reflection of the data contained within the full article.
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 and non-randomized studies.

One relevant non-randomized study was identified regarding the clinical evidence that wearing hand and wrist jewellery can increase the risk of bacteria transmission from healthcare workers to patients. No relevant health technology assessment reports, systematic reviews, meta-analyses, or randomized controlled trials were identified. Additional information that may be of interest, including studies examining bacterial colonization of the hands and wrists of healthcare workers but that do not address patient-related outcomes, is included in the appendix.

OVERALL SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

Limited evidence was identified regarding the evidence that wearing hand and wrist jewellery can increase the risk of bacteria transmission from healthcare worker to patient. The identified non-randomized study found no correlation between wearing a plain ring under a surgical glove and an increase in post-operative infections.\(^1\) Studies examining the correlation between hand and wrist jewellery and bacterial colonization on the hands and wrists of healthcare workers but that do not address patient-related outcomes are included in the appendix.
REFERENCES SUMMARIZED

Health technology assessments
No literature identified.

Systematic reviews and meta-analyses
No literature identified.

Randomized controlled trials
No literature identified.

Non-randomized studies


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APPENDIX – FURTHER INFORMATION:

Randomized controlled trials- no patient outcomes


Non-randomized studies- no patient outcomes


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Additional references

11. Bond L, Clamp PJ, Gray K, Van Dam V. Patients’ perceptions of doctors’ clothing: should we really be ‘bare below the elbow’? J Laryngol Otol. 2010 Sep;124(9):963-6. PubMed: PM20519044