Preventing post-operative constipation in elderly orthopedic patients – a challenge in fundamental nursing care

by

Mette Trads

Background

The prevalence of postoperative constipation is sparsely described. Constipation might have an impact on quality of life. Screening for risk of developing constipation has yet to be validated in a Danish population of orthopedic patients and it is necessary to enable the patients in preventing health problems like constipation.

Methods

A prevalence and incidence study: patients with hip fractures were interviewed at admission, discharge and by telephone 30 days after surgery to assess constipation rates. A validation study: patients with hip fractures or with knee or hip replacements were assessed with Constipation Risk Assessment Scale upon admittance or in the outpatient clinic and 30 days after surgery by phone. An intervention study: Quasi-experimental design where patients in a control group received conventional care. A nursing intervention including admission interview with usual defecation pattern and usual intake of fluid and fibers, an individual care plan, principles of primary nursing and continued dialogues with the patient was tested on patients with hip fractures. A systematic review: The methodology of "Joanna Briggs Institute" was used.

Results

Constipation rates were 51.9 % upon admission, 69.1 % at discharge and 62.7 % 30 days after surgery. Usual defecation pattern was re-established after 9.5 days. For the acute and the elective patients sensitivity for the screening tool was 0.67 and 0.57, specificity 0.54 and 0.52, positive predictive value 0.59 and 0.38, negative predictive value 0.63 and 0.7, respectively. Constipation rate 30 days after surgery in the intervention group vs. the control group was significantly lower than in patients and the fiber and fluid intake was significantly higher. In the systematic review all the 13 included studies reported statistically significantly lower health status in the constipated than in the non-constipated subjects with few exceptions.
To fulfill the requirements for the PhD degree, Mette Trads has submitted the thesis: “Preventing post-operative constipation in elderly orthopedic patients – a challenge in fundamental nursing care”, to the Faculty Council of Medicine at Aalborg University. The Faculty Council has appointed the following adjudication committee to evaluate the thesis and the associated lecture:

**Professor Bridie Kent**  
Plymouth University  
United Kingdom

**Professor Albert Westergren**  
Högskolan Kristianstad  
Sweden

**Chairman:**  
Associate Professor Mette Grønkjær  
Aalborg University  
Denmark

**Moderator:**  
Professor Erik Elgaard Sørensen  
Aalborg University  
Denmark

The PhD lecture is public and will take place on:

**Monday 29 May 2017 at 13:00**  
Regionshospitalet – Skovlyvej 15  
8930 Randers NØ

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**Program for PhD lecture on**  
**Monday 29 May 2017**

by

**Mette Trads**

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– a challenge in fundamental nursing care

Chairman: Associate Professor Mette Grønkjær  
Moderator: Professor Erik Elgaard Sørensen

13.00 Opening by the Moderator

13.05 PhD lecture by Mette Trads

13.50 Break

14.00 Questions and comments from the Committee  
Questions and comments from the audience at the  
Moderator’s discretion

16.00 Conclusion of the session by the Moderator

After the session a reception will be arranged