

New skin barrier product reduces costs for ostomy care

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Ostomy patients using a new type of skin barrier product—infused with ceramides that play an essential role in the normal barrier function of the skin—experience lower costs of care, according to a randomized trial published in the *Journal of Wound, Ostomy and Continence Nursing*, the official journal of the Wound, Ostomy and Continence Nurses (WOCN) Society.

An estimated 800,000 Americans live with an ostomy, with up to 80 percent experiencing high rates of peristomal skin complications (PSCs)—skin inflammation, injury, or damage occurring around the ostomy—that can lead to pain, reduce life satisfaction, and increase [health care costs](#). The ceramide-infused skin barriers used in the study were designed to protect the skin around the ostomy and reduce moisture loss from damaged skin.

"The use of a ceramide-infused barrier significantly decreased cost and increased satisfaction with patient-reported outcomes compared to conventional skin barriers," said Janice C. Colwell, MS, RN, CWOCN, FAAN, of University of Chicago Medicine, a principal author of the study report.

"Use of the ceramide-infused barrier significantly reduced stoma-related cost of care over a 12-week period," said Colwell. Adjusted average [costs](#) during this time were about \$224 for patients using the new product versus \$260 for the placebo group: a relative 14 percent reduction.

The cost savings included use of skin barriers and other ostomy care accessories, medications, emergency department and hospital visits, as well as "social costs" such as missed work or appointments.

The study enrolled 153 adult ostomy patients from 25 sites in the United States, Canada, and Europe. Patients were randomly assigned to use ceramide-infused or conventional (placebo) skin barrier products for 12 weeks. Costs of care, evidence of PSCs, and other outcomes were compared between groups. The study was sponsored by Hollister, Inc., manufacturer of the new skin barrier product.

Reflecting the high occurrence of complications among ostomy patients, the overall rate of PSCs was 47.7 percent. Patients using the ceramide-infused barriers were less likely to experience PSCs—40.5 percent versus 55.4 percent—but the difference was not statistically significant.

Seventy-five percent of [patients](#) using the ceramide-infused skin barrier said they were "very satisfied" with [barrier](#) performance, compared to 55 percent of those using conventional [skin](#) barriers. The ceramide-infused barriers were also rated higher for prevention of leakage and itching.

More information: Janice C. Colwell et al. A Randomized Controlled Trial Determining Variances in Ostomy Skin Conditions and the Economic Impact (ADVOCATE Trial), *Journal of Wound, Ostomy and Continence Nursing* (2018). [DOI: 10.1097/WON.0000000000000389](https://doi.org/10.1097/WON.0000000000000389)

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