



An evaluation of the safety and efficacy of the indwelling catheter valves



O'Brien M, Casey L, Raheem OA, D'Arcy FT, Lynch TH
The Department of Urology, The University of Dublin, Trinity College,
St James's Hospital,
Dublin, Ireland

INTRODUCTION

A review of the literature has revealed a paucity of data regarding the safety and efficacy of the indwelling catheter valves and indicates that they are not in routine use^{1,2}. We prospectively evaluated patients using indwelling catheter valves versus standard leg bags over a 4 month period.

METHODS

Eighteen patients were included in this study from February to May 2008. One type of catheter valve was used (Bard® Flip-Flo, UK). All patients were evaluated eight to ten weeks after insertion of catheter valve. A questionnaire form was completed by patients involved on their urological outpatient visits. The questionnaire consists of seven yes/no questions to record catheter valve performance (comfort, ease of use, tendency to leak, patient confidence and presence of infection).

RESULTS

Twelve males and six females with long term catheters took part. Mean age was 75 year-old. The majority of patients found the catheter valve comfortable, inconspicuous and easy to use (83%, 61% and 67% respectively). Nearly 90% reported confidence with using their valves. 67% demonstrated no objective signs of infection.



Flip-Flo® Catheter Valve, Bard Ltd, UK

DISCUSSION

There has been an apparent advantage of the usage of the valve catheters over other types of indwelling catheters. This may be partly due to their functional mechanism which mimic the normal physiological control of the urinary sphincter. The function of the patient's dexterity also need to be assessed in order to achieve satisfactory results³.

CONCLUSION

The flip-flow valve is a viable and patient friendly alternative to the leg bags in patients with long term catheters. In carefully selected patients, advantages include improved discretion and patient comfort. We observed no apparent increase in the incidence of catheter blockage or UTI.

REFERENCES

1. Fader *et al.*, 1997, Br J Nurs.
2. Rowley *et al.*, 1995, ICS.
3. Lewington *et al.*, 1989, BAUS.

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