Spinal Cord Injury: Bladder management needed from day 1.

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The history of the urological system care after SCI has been far from good. Urorenal complications used in the 1960’s to account for half of the overall mortality. Because of better treatment based on more knowledge this figure has dropped very substantially but there is still a higher risk in SCI patients, with standardised mortality ratio of 22.8 (observed to expected deaths-general population. Moreover urological complications are still a main cause of readmission and cost.

The knowledge has improved:

* Kidney function relates to bladder function
* Pressure in the bladder is of huge importance during filling and voiding
* Care should be optimal from day 1 and follow up after rehabilitation has to be livelong.

Urological management is in the hands of many different medics and allied professionals, but also family, society, work and mainly of the patient.

The goals of care are multiple: kidneys safe, no complications, continence, affordable, best treatment at the cheapest price.

The bladder management in the first weeks after trauma can determine the lifelong outcome.

The first days-weeks the bladder suffers from neurogenic shock and bladder drainage is needed. The importance of giving proper catheter care needs to be stressed.

The proper diagnosis of the new urologic condition will need a complete observation, clinical examination, urodynamics and other technical testing.

Treatment will depend on the type of dysfunction, which will in itself depend at least partly, on the level and completeness of the spinal cord lesion.

If applicable intermittent catheterisation is the best treatment today. In many extra treatment as with drugs will be needed. Newer techniques as botulinum toxin injection, electrical modulation/stimulation are explored.

Surgery can be necessary if an unacceptable result is obtained by other means.

When observing what is the real situation around the world , one can see much progress but improvement can still be obtained for the benefit of the SCI patient, his relatives and society.