

Self-made Compressive Dressing for Vaginoplasty

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Compressive dressings and garments are very useful for preventing postoperative edema, hematoma, and seroma formation at the surgical site [1]. Vaginoplasty is one of the most popular surgical procedures of sex reassignment [2]. Although many commercial compressive bandages and dressings are on the market for post-bariatric surgery patients, few of these dressings are available for patients undergoing vaginoplasty.

In our department, we make use of a self-made compressive dressing with two pieces of cotton elastic bandages (Tubigrip, SePro Healthcare Inc., Montgomeryville, PA, USA) spliced together in a T shape. The horizontal component of the bandage is tailored to fit the waist circumference of the patient with a 2/3 vertical component (Fig. 1). The dressing is then fixed with elastic adhesive bandages (Tensoplast®) to ensure adequate retention (Fig. 2). According to our protocol, patients who undergo vaginoplasty keep the dressing in situ for 48–72 h after surgery. Eventually, they then wear sports underwear. There is no need to change the dressing during the first 2 days after the procedure since the patient undergoes preoperative bowel preparation and starts a low-residue diet, and a urinary catheter is left in the bladder for

5–7 days. The dressing is comfortable and encourages the patient to leave the bed early, walk, and resume normal physical activity. In the group we have tested, the device was never removed due to discomfort or complaints, indicating an excellent level of acceptance of the dressing. We have used this type of dressing in 51 vaginoplasties performed in our institute from 2008 to 2012. All patients were compliant with the compressive dressing, ensuring at the same time postoperative compression and easy removal either in a sitting or supine position.

Hematoma and edema formation are common complications after genital surgery [3]. Adequate compression is essential to reducing such complications [4]. Cotton elastic bandages have proven to be effective in reducing postoperative bleeding and hypertrophic scarring [5]. The use of Tubigrip elastic bandages is a simple, cost effective, and efficient method [6] to achieve good compression after vaginoplasty procedures in a region where normally compressive bandages are difficult to place. This device is well tolerated by the patient and easy to remove with dressing changes.



Fig. 1 The two stripes of Tubigrip spliced together

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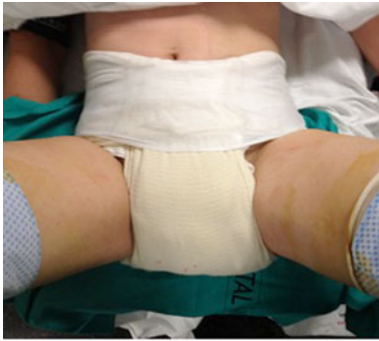


Fig. 2 Compressive dressing in place

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