The useful distraction of mobile ‘apps’

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Distraction is a well established technique in paediatric pain management.¹ Play specialists are not always available but smartphones are ubiquitous. We have successfully used a simple free application (BBC CBeebies) to distract children aged 18 months and older for numerous procedures, from joint examination and change of plaster to percutaneous wire removal. Furthermore, parents can also be engaged in holding the phone and pressing the buttons, which reduces the anxiety at the bedside. Other apps may work just as well.

Reference

1. DeMore M, Cohen LL. Distraction for pediatric immunization pain: a critical review. *J Clin Psychol Med Settings* 2005; **12**: 281–291.

A simple technique of managing a urine bag

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None of the authors have any commercial interest in the product described in this technical tip.

Patients with a urethral catheter can either carry the urine bag or it can be strapped to the thigh or the leg. The FlexiHang bag hanger

Figure 1 Urine bag hooked to the trouser belt using FlexiHang bag hanger

Figure 2 Urine bag easily accessible for drainage

(Flexicare, Mountain Ash, UK) is normally used for hanging the urine bag by the bedside but it can also be used to hook the urine bag to the waist belt of the trousers. The bag is tucked inside the trousers (Fig 1), allowing easy access (Fig 2). This should also help prevent ‘traumatic hypospadias’ caused by persistent pressure of the catheter on the urethra ventrally.

Topical use of tranexamic acid to control parastomal bleeding

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Parastomal bleeding caused by stomal varices from portal hypertension is difficult to treat and distressing for the patient. Tranexamic acid is an antifibrinolytic, used as an oral or intravenous procoagulant although a topical form has been used for epistaxis and intraoperatively.¹ We describe the use of topical tranexamic acid to control parastomal bleeding from stomal varices. A 5ml vial of tranexamic acid (100mg/ml) is used to soak a swab, which is applied to the stoma and secured with an adhesive dressing. This can be repeated three times daily. The topical route reduces the thrombotic risks associated with tranexamic acid.

Reference

1. Ker K, Beecher D, Roberts I. Topical application of tranexamic acid for the reduction of bleeding. *Cochrane Database Syst Rev* 2013; **7**: CD010562.