

REFERENCE

- [1] Schulz A, Depner C, Lefering R, et al. A prospective clinical trial comparing Biobrane[®] Dressilk[®] and PolyMem[®] dressings on partial-thickness skin graft donor sites. *Burns* 2015 February. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.burns.2014.12.016>.

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Letter to the editor

A prospective clinical trial comparing Biobrane1 Dressilk1 and PolyMem1 dressings on partial-thickness skin graft donor sites



The authors appreciate the very important and valuable comments of Mrs Benskin representing the interests of Ferris Mfg. Corp., U.S.A.

Regarding the results on infection rates we would like to refer to the result section where detailed data are given. All data were compiled according to the material and methods section [1]. We politely want to thank Mrs Benskin for her important and kind advice that we by mistake did not remove the staplers in time in the presented patient. Nevertheless we do not see any danger of lasting effect in our study's results for this patient. Finally the authors would like to disclose that no funding of any kind was received for the presented study. We strongly believe that our research projects should remain without any bias or financial influence which may possibly interfere with scientific independence or may carry any risk of industrial pressure in reference to unpleasant results of any kind in the near future.

In this letter the authors refer to the following article

A. Schulz, C. Deppner, R. Lefering, J. Kricheldorf, S. Kästner, P. Fuchs, E. Demir A prospective clinical trial comparing Biobrane1 Dressilk1 and PolyMem1 dressings on partial-thickness skin graft donor sites. *Burns* (2015), <http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.burns.2014.12.016>

REFERENCE

- [1] Schulz A, Depner C, Lefering R, Kricheldorf J, Kastner S, Fuchs PC, et al. A prospective clinical trial comparing

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Letter to the Editor

Some ethical challenges regarding self-immolation



Dear Editor,

We read Khankeh et al.'s article (2015) entitled "A model to explain suicide by self-immolation among Iranian women: A grounded theory study" with great interest and enjoyed a lot. We believe that they have well presented the underlying causes of the tragedy of women's self-immolation in Iran [1]. However, it seems that some points should be more noticed regarding their valuable paper. First of all, every voluntary act can be analyzed based on the three ethical viewpoints including deontology, utilitarianism and virtue ethics [2]. Considering self-immolation as an individual case, we can pay attention to it according to each perspective. Based on deontological tradition, there are some situations in which suicide can be ethical, rational and even it may be a duty such as having burdensome illness for end stage patients or making troubles to others by old people [3]. However, it seems that this idea is faced with some conflicts. What should we do when two duties contradict each other? For instance, we must consider our health as a duty, so in this case, self-harm is prohibited, and in the same time we should concern about our ethical duty of beneficence to others [4]. Given some utilitarians' concepts, the goodness of an act can be judged only by its benefits considered by the agent for him/herself and not by the effects on the others. In this case, harmful consequences of self-immolation on emotional, economical, and interpersonal relationships with others and society can be ignored. Hence, in this perspective, self-immolation can

be justified too [5]. Similarly, this idea has some limitations. We know that some of our ethical duties are related to others and we are not allowed to do whatever we are interested in with ourselves and every one must be aware of the consequences of his/her acts toward the others [6]. In other words, we cannot speak about right or wrong ethics of self-immolation without any care to the complex chain of related affairs with ourselves and others. Thirdly, regarding virtue ethics, the final goal is promotion of individual's ethical status, and ethical conduct is the act which leads to more virtues for somebody and help for her/him in achieving excellence [2]. So, since self-immolation will not increase any virtue for anybody, it cannot be ethically justified. As a result, although self-immolation is not allowed in accordance with the last perspective, there are a lot of debates on the first and the second traditions whether self-immolation is ethical or not [7]. Anyway, accepting each kind of the three concepts, we should not forget the distinction between ethics and law and should remember that even if we do not consider the wrongness of self-immolation based on moral rules, we must ethically respect to our local law [8].

Authors' contributions

Dr. Zohrehsadat Naji designed the idea, drafted the paper and approved the version to be published. Dr. Payman Salamati designed the idea, revised the paper critically and approved the version to be published.

Conflicts of interests

None.

Role of the funding source

None.

Ethics committee approval

The paper has been prepared in accordance with the rules of the ethical review board of Tehran University of Medical Sciences.

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Letter to the Editor

Response to Letter to Editor "Some ethical challenges regarding self-immolation"



Dear Editor,

Thanks to Drs. Naji and Salamati for their praise of our scholarly work and their thoughtful commentary on our conclusions. We are not philosophers, but we are personally uncomfortable questioning the morality of whether a suicide by self-immolation is justified. As health care providers, we value human life and believe most suicides are unjustified by any school of philosophy. We also recognize there may be some unique situations, such as painful end-of-life conditions, when ethicists make persuasive arguments that suicide may be defensible and even preferable [1]; in our experience, self-immolation victims rarely fit these rare circumstances. Victims of self-immolation in Iran are prototypically young and uneducated women living in rural area [2,3]. Their self-immolation attempts are brought about by cultural context, family conflict, mental health challenges, and easy access to flammable fuels [4,5].

Our most recent research, to which Drs. Naji and Salamati refer, suggests most victims of self-immolation are in unhappy life situations and suffer from mental instability