

Eye Glasses and Dentures in the O. R.: The Choice is Yours!

By Sonya Atkinson, Felina Brydges, Joan Eagle, Darlene Marshall & Judi Tyndall

Introduction

Nurses are well aware that most patients prefer to have control over their lives as long as possible before surgery. Porteous & Tyndall (1994) reported that, when given a clear choice most patients opt to walk to the Operating Room prior to surgery rather than go by stretcher (regardless of the type of surgery).

Historically, patients have been required to remove their dentures and/or glasses, before coming to

the Operating Room from another ward. Intuitively, nurses know that most patients prefer to keep their glasses on and their dentures in place as long as possible before surgery.

This descriptive study will examine the choices made pre-operatively regarding dentures and/or glasses, the reason given for the choice, and the relative satisfaction with the choice post-operatively.

Literature Review

A literature search did not reveal any information or research studies regarding patients wearing dentures and/or glasses to the Operating Room (OR). Four studies were found concerning involvement of the patient in selecting various options for hospital care. The most pertinent study in the area of patients' choice regarding operating room procedures was done by Simpson & McCallum (1992). This study examined the feasibility of involving the patient in the scheduling of their elective surgery. They found that not only was patient involvement in OR scheduling feasible, but by using patient choice, OR cancellations

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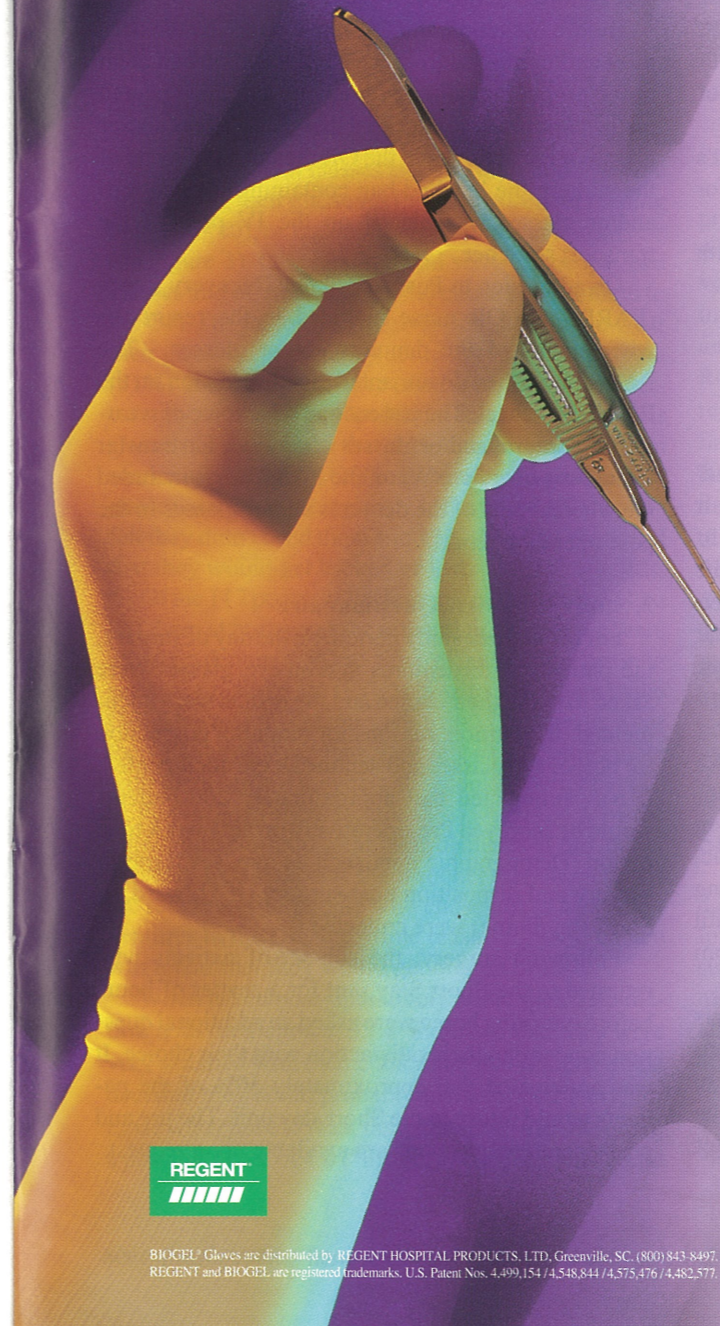
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Abstract

Historically, patients have been required to remove their dentures and eye glasses on the pre-surgical ward before being taken to the Operating Room (OR) on the day of surgery. This descriptive study examined the choices made by patients pre-operatively regarding dentures and/or glasses, the reasons given for the choice, and the relative satisfaction with the choice post-operatively.

Of the 213 patients enrolled in this study, 66% were female with an average age of 57 years. Only patients wearing eye glasses or dentures were included. Sixty-nine percent of the patients wearing glasses and 85% wearing dentures chose to wear them to the OR. When asked post-operatively about their satisfaction with their choice, 95% indicated that they were very satisfied with their choice and that it was the best decision they could possibly have made. No glasses or dentures were broken or lost during the study.

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were reduced by 32% and failures to attend were reduced by 68% in a three-month time period.

Other studies cited in the literature involved less related areas of patient choice such as:

- 1) in selecting childbirth settings [Acheson, Harris & Zyzanski, 1991];
- 2) in choosing not to resuscitate when critically ill [Gleeson & Wise, 1990]; and
- 3) in participatory perinatal care [Littlefield, Chang & Adams, 1990].

Since no studies were found which examined the question of patient choice in relation to the wearing of glasses and/or dentures to the operating room, it is relevant to pursue the following questions.

Study Questions

When offered a choice pre-operatively:

- 1) Did patients want to wear their dentures and/or eye glasses to the Operating Room?
- 2) What reason(s) were given for the patient's choice to either wear or not wear their dentures and/or glasses?
- 3) Post-operatively, was the patient satisfied with the choice he or she had made pre-operatively?

Study Design

A prospective, descriptive survey.

Study Population

All pre-operative patients, who wore dentures and/or glasses and were admitted the same day as their surgery were eligible for the study regardless of whether or not they had pre-operative sedation. The patients represented in this study included those having general, gynaecology, oncology, orthopedic, ear nose and throat, urology, dental, and plastic surgeries.

Study Method

1. Implementation of the Dentures and/or Eye Glasses Procedure

Several days before their scheduled surgery during their pre-operative visit to the Pre-Admission Clinic, eligible patients were told about the option of retaining possession of their dentures and/or eye glasses until the induction of anesthesia in the Operating Room (OR), or leaving them on the pre-admission ward.

On admission the day of surgery, the patient was asked to make a choice with regards to wearing dentures and/or glasses to the OR. If the patient chose to wear dentures and/or glasses, a bag labelled with the patients' name which contained a denture cup and/or

padding eye glass envelope was prepared. The bag was placed on the patient's IV pole and travelled with the patient to the OR. The "same day" nurse documented on the Perioperative checklist whether or not the patient was wearing dentures and/or glasses.

On admission to patient receiving, the "patient receiving" (PR) nurse asked the patient if s/he was wearing dentures and/or glasses. If the patient's decision had changed, for example, the patient had left the dentures and/or glasses with a family member, the PR nurse documented the exact location of the dentures and/or glasses on the patient's chart. If the patient had retained his/her dentures and/or glasses, the PR nurse informed the OR nurse before the patient was admitted to the OR theatre.

Before induction, the OR nurse removed the dentures and/or glasses from the patient and placed them in the proper container with labels, and documented on the perioperative checklist that the dentures and/or glasses were removed in the OR theatre. At the end of the surgery the labelled bag containing the dentures and/or glasses was placed on the IV pole of the transport stretcher.

On admission to Post Anesthetic Recovery Room (PARR), the OR nurse included in the report the whereabouts of the dentures and/or glasses. The PARR nurse then documented the information on the PARR flowsheet. The patient had the choice of wearing the dentures and/or glasses when alert. On transfer to the Post-operative Ward, the PARR nurse included the whereabouts of the dentures and/or glasses in the post-operative report.

2. Study Interview/Questionnaire

For the 4-week study period, on the day of surgery, the patients with dentures and/or eye glasses were asked to make their choice and the results were documented. In addition, reasons for retaining possession (or not) of eye glasses and dentures were documented. It was anticipated that approximately 200 patients would be surveyed Pre-operatively in the 4-week time period. Demographic data such as age, sex, type of surgery and disposition post-surgery (ICU, ward, or Short stay/home) were collected.

Following surgery, the sub-set of patients who returned to the Short Stay unit for a matter of hours before returning home were asked an additional question concerning their satisfaction with their choice. It was anticipated that approximately 50% of the patients would return to the Short stay unit. The pre and post-operative questions are available upon request.

Data Analysis:

All data were analyzed using descriptive statistics.

Study Results

Two hundred and thirteen surgical patients were included in the study. Sixty-six percent of the population were female. The average age was 57 years with a range from 15 to 91 years. The median age was 61 years with a bimodal distribution at 70 and 72 years. As shown in Figure 1, the most common type of surgery was major gynecology (20.7%), followed by minor general surgery (12.8%), minor gynecology (12.2%), minor orthopedic (11.7%), and major orthopedic (11.2%). Following surgery, 55% of this population were admitted to a hospital ward, 3% went to the intensive care unit (ICU) and 42% returned to the short-stay unit and then home. (Figure 2).

In general, on admission to the pre-surgery clinic, 40% of this population (N=86) were wearing glasses, 20% (N=43) were wearing dentures, 33% (N=70) were wearing both glasses and dentures, and 7% were not wearing their glasses as they were used for reading only (N=10), or had left their dentures at home (N=4) (Figure 3). One hundred and sixty-six people had glasses and of these, 114 (69%) chose to wear them to the OR. The major reason given for choosing to wear their glasses was that they could not see without them (61%) and that it felt more comfortable (34%). Interestingly, 6% of the population chose to wear their glasses in the belief that they would receive them sooner after surgery. Of the remaining 52 people who chose not to wear their glasses to the ORs 85% (N=44) felt they didn't need them and 12% (N=6) were afraid that they would get broken or lost.

Of the 117 people with dentures in this study, 4 had left them at home and the remaining 113 people were wearing dentures at the time of admission prior to surgery. Of these, 96 (85%) chose to wear them to the OR. The major reason given for choosing to wear their dentures was that they felt more comfortable with them (46%), they felt they looked better (31%), or they needed them to talk (3%). Again, 6% of the population chose to wear their dentures in the belief that they would receive them sooner after surgery. Of the remaining 17 people who chose not to wear their dentures to the OR, the prime reason for their choice was a fear that they would get broken or lost.

When asked post-operatively about their satisfaction with their choice, 95% indicated that they were very satisfied with their choice and that it was the best decision they could probably make. Specifically, for those who chose to wear their glasses to the OR, out of a possible score of 4.0 ("the very best decision I could

have made; would definitely do it again"), the average rating was 3.98. For those who chose not to wear their glasses to the OR, the average rating was 3.78. Similarly, for those who chose to wear their dentures to the OR the average rating was 3.97. For those who chose not to wear their dentures, the average score was a perfect agreement of 4.0 ("the very best decision I could have made; would definitely do it again").

Conclusion and Discussion

On the basis of the finding from this study, we conclude that not only is it important for the patient to be able to make a choice regarding the wearing of their eye glasses and/or dentures into the Operating Room, but that their choice is essential to enable our patients to retain their personal identity and sense of dignity. This is particularly important when it comes to dentures. Ninety-one percent of the denture-wearers chose to wear them right into the operating theatre because it felt more comfortable and "looked better".

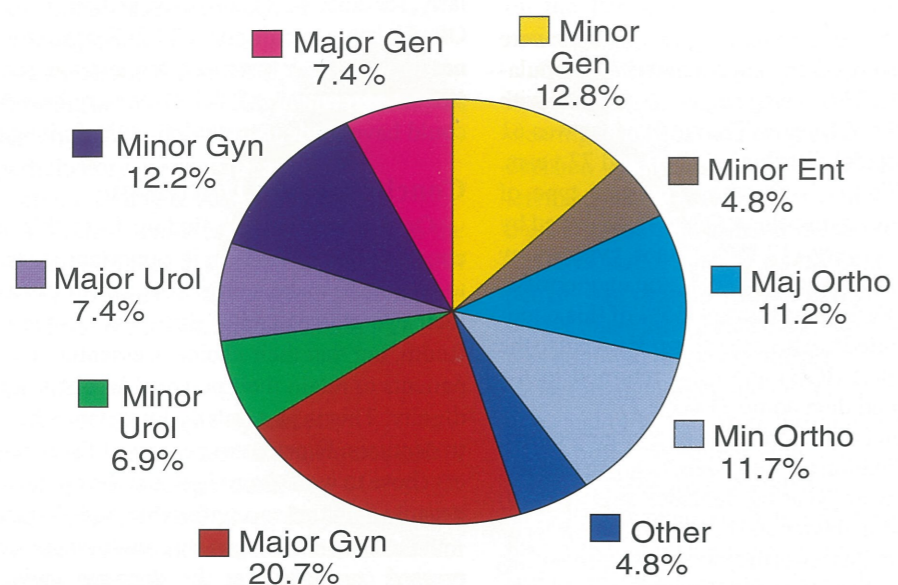
When we first began this study, many nurses expressed concerns that the dentures and/or glasses would be lost or broken in transport. Another concern voiced by physicians and nurses was the potential for injury related to retained dentures during anesthesia and surgery. Also, the Post Anesthetic Recovery Room staff were concerned about the dentures being returned too soon post-operatively. By having the Same Day Unit, Operating Room and Post Anesthetic Recovery Room nurses working together on this study, the nurses on each unit developed a method of handling and tracking of dentures and/or eye glasses throughout the perioperative period. There were no dentures and/or eye glasses lost or broken in this study. These has been no incident of retained dentures or injury related to patients having their dentures and/or eye glasses returned too soon post-operatively. The practice of the patients wearing dentures and/or glasses into the operating theatre has continued beyond the study with no mishaps.

Study Limitations

The study was limited to patients admitted on the day of surgery. The post-operative questions were limited to patients being discharged on the day of surgery. The study group felt this method facilitated more accurate return of data because patients generally would be feeling better and more alert than those assigned to the ICU or ward. However, less than half of the study population was discharged to the Short Stay Unit and then home and thus available for feedback concerning their satisfaction with their choice.

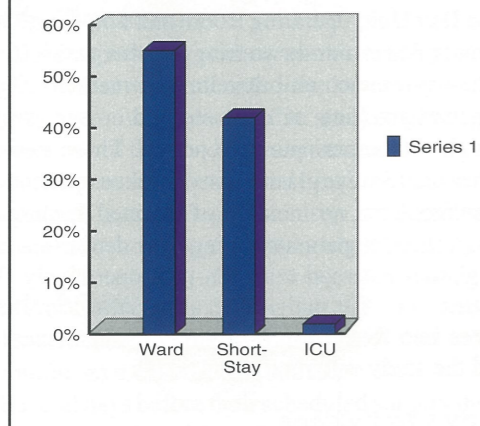
Type of Surgery

Figure 1



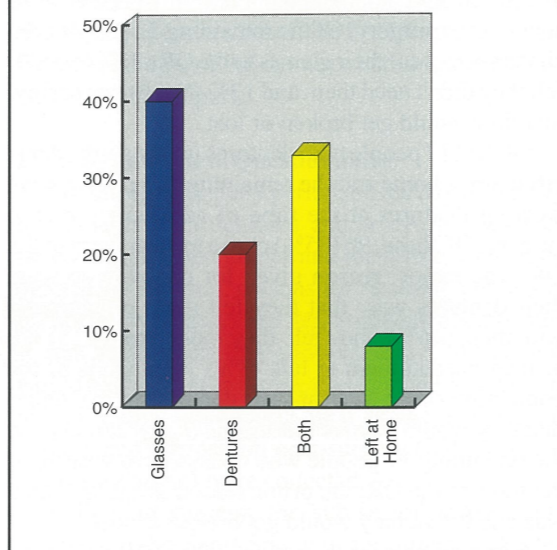
Post-Operative Disposition

Figure 2



Proportion Wearing Glasses/Dentures

Figure 3



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By Shelly Zareski
Chairperson
ORNAC Awards Committee

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copies of nursing license, membership in a provincial OR association, perioperative nursing certification (if applicable) and proof of acceptance in an education program.

The complete, typed application form and supporting documentation must be submitted to the Chair of the ORNAC Awards Committee before is **March 15th each year**. This information can be found in every issue of the *Canadian Operating Room Nursing Journal*. Late submissions will not be considered.

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Application Requirements

The personal profile / resume must be typed and supporting data enclosed with the completed application form. The application will not be considered if this criteria is not met. This data includes letters of reference as indicated on the application form, photo

ORNAC recognizes that the education of perioperative nurses plays a pivotal role in providing a strong and successful national organization. The ORNAC Executive and Board of Directors appreciates the financial support provided by Johnson & Johnson Medical Products.