PII-31: Use of Essential Oils to treat MRSA in End of Life: A Case study

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Abstract:
Introduction: MRSA is resistant to most antibiotics and is an important cause of mortality and morbidity in older adults. Up to 24% of all residents living in long term care facilities are colonized by MRSA but have no symptoms. Some long term care facilities place patients in isolation whose cultures are positive and whose infected drainage cannot be contained. Patients who are terminal and on hospice are limited by the hospice benefit as to what treatments they can receive. Isolating patients for up to years sometimes affects the quality of life for these patients. Several researchers have documented the effectiveness of specific essential oils in treating MRSA. The aim of this study was to examine the effectiveness of the use of essential oils to treat symptomatic MRSA infection which did not respond to conventional antibiotics.

Method(s): This study is a case report of one patient who had been in isolation at the long term care facility for 3 years prior to her hospice admission. Cultures taken from her eyes and nares continued to identify Staphylococcus aureus in spite of attempts to treat with multiple oral, topical and IV antibiotics. A mixture was made of 15 drops of lavendula angustifolia in 500 cc of normal saline. Nasal and eye cultures were done prior to starting the treatment. The instructions to staff were to vigorously shake the mixture, soak a cotton ball wand wash the eye with one movement from the corner to the periphery twice a day. The same solution was applied to a Qtip and both nares wiped twice a day.

Results: Symptoms of active infection (red, draining, itchy eyes) subsided after 7 days of treatment. Cultures after four weeks of treatment were negative for MRSA.
**Discussion & Conclusions:** Symptomatic MRSA infections affect quality of life especially if contaminated drainage cannot be contained and the patient is forced to stay in isolation. The use of essential oils provides a safe, cost effective, non obtrusive way to treat MRSA and improve quality of life for the terminally ill patient. More research is needed to add to the existing body of evidence of the antimicrobial properties of essential oils.

**Abstract History:**
This abstract has not been presented or accepted for presentation in whole or in part at the SNRS or other scientific meeting.

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