

Hemostasis with a twist: A case report and lessons learned

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ABSTRACT

Introduction: Surgicel is an oxidised regenerated cellulose (ORC) which is commonly used as a hemostatic agent in various surgical procedures. It helps control bleeding as the product contains cellulosic acid, which facilitates hemostasis by denaturing blood protein. Surgicel is bioabsorbable and typically dissolves within one to two weeks after application. We report a case of intestinal obstruction in a patient who underwent a caesarean section, potentially related to the use of Surgicel. **Case Description:** A 39-year-old para 5 on the second day post-operative following emergency caesarean section developed abdominal discomfort and distension. Upon examination, her abdomen was found to be tense and distended with no bowel sounds. A computed tomography scan was performed, which revealed small bowel dilatation (up to 4 cm diameter) and a pelvic collection. The case was referred to the surgical team, and an exploratory laparotomy was performed. Intraoperative findings included dilatation of both small and large bowel extending to the upper rectum. Notably, a segmental small bowel adhesion formed an interloop collection, and a clump of Surgicel with slough was found over the uterine incision site. The Surgicel was removed, and the small bowel content and bile were decompressed. Postoperatively, the patient was started on antibiotics and discharged on postoperative day 4 in stable condition. **Discussion:** This case highlights a rare complication of Surgicel use. Surgeons need to be aware of the potential complications of using Surgicel. Prompt identification and surgical intervention, as demonstrated in this case, are crucial to prevent further morbidity and ensure a positive patient outcome.