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Background and importance

Surgical patients are exposed to infections, especially surgical site infections which is a burden for public health. To prevent and cure these infections, surgical teams and patients refer to antimicrobials whose inappropriate use leads to an increase of antimicrobial resistance. However patients' involvement in the use of antibiotics can help to avoid its inappropriate use.

Aim and objectives: We interviewed some patients who had undergone surgery to explore their perceptions of healthcare-associated infections and antibiotic use.

Patients and methods

Data were collected by two socio-anthropologists over a period of two months in 2019 using semi-structured individual interviews. Patients in digestive and obstetric wards of two hospitals were included. Data analysis was performed by three pharmacists using content analysis. Coding was realized in pairs and in-depth analysis.

Results

Thirty patients were interviewed. The analysis reveals three main themes .

- **knowledge on healthcare associated infections** mechanisms: Some of them knew that they can contract an infection in hospital, other do not.

« I couldn't call the name of a disease, but there are various kinds of diseases in the hospital and you can get infected with them ». (Cécile, cesarean).

- **Patients' perception of antibiotics utilization**

Majority of patients, educated or not, testified that antibiotics are used for avoiding the suppuration of surgical wounds, or healing of wounds. Other argued that antibiotics make them stronger after surgery.

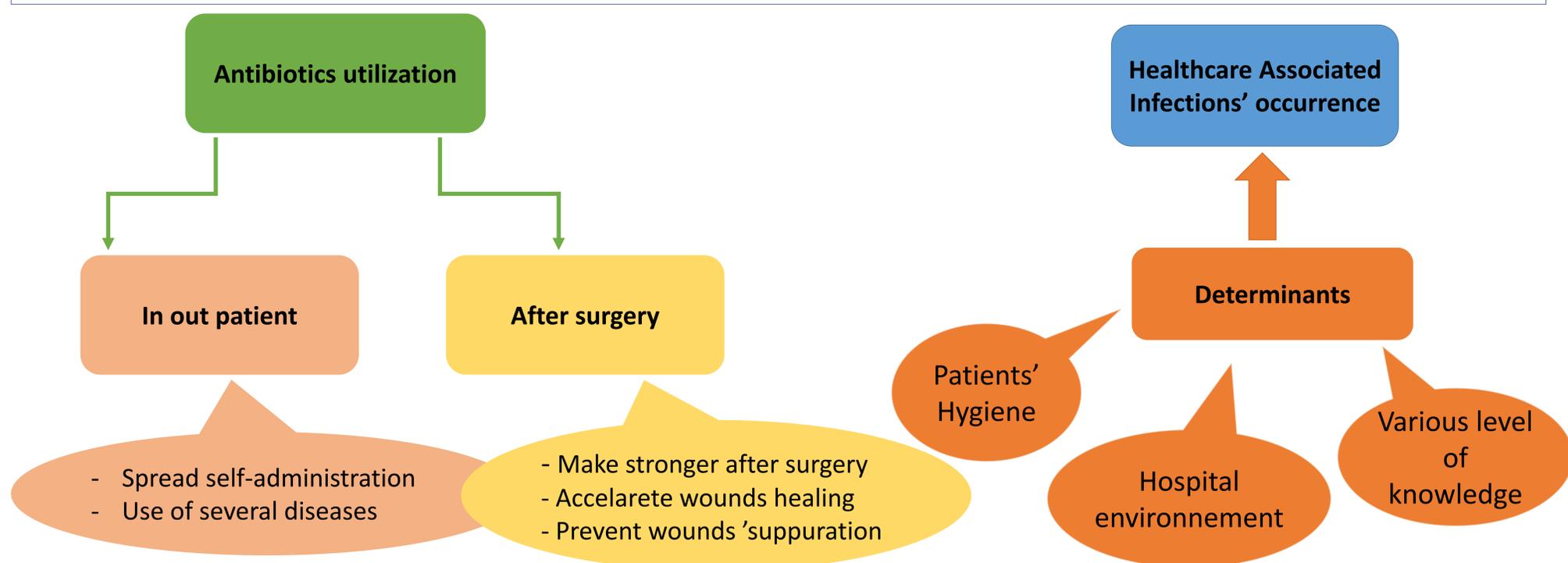
« What I know is that antibiotics heal wounds ». (Cout, cesarean).

Moreover, antibiotics utilization in outpatient without healthcare workers' prescription was spread in our patients.

«No I take two. When I start to feel pain I take two. When the pain stops I stop. Yes when I take it, I feel satisfaction in my stomach ». (Chantal, visceral).

- **Communication around patients 'care** : Communication on patients 'care were poorly provided by healthcare professionals in view of our interviewee's declarations.

«They didn't tell us anything. When they come, they only inject and they leave ». (Mother of a baby, visceral)



Conclusion and relevance

Patients' perception of the role of antibiotics in general or in surgery was imprecise, in relationship with their perception of infections associated with care. It is therefore essential to strengthen a clear dialogue between healthcare professionals and patients to rise up the level of their knowledge on healthcare associated infections and the use of antibiotics.

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