A common problem encountered during laparoscopic procedures is fogging of the scopes, which makes laparoscopy unsafe. To prevent fogging, reheating the scope outside the abdomen and use of anti-fog solution may be necessary, and this may need to be done frequently during the surgical procedure. The use of disposable scope warmers has made laparoscopy safer by preventing fogging.

The disposable scope warmers (Single Use Sterile Pre-Surgical Scope Warmer, Newco Surgical, Sutton Coldfield) (Figure 1) were trialled during laparoscopic procedures at Milton Keynes Hospital. The procedures included 15 diagnostic laparoscopies and laparoscopic cholecystectomies, in both elective and emergency settings. The warmer enabled the scope to stay warm during the entire procedure, without needing to take the scope out of the abdomen. This enabled the surgeon to perform the procedures safely and quickly. The duration of the procedures was shorter (mean 10 minutes) and the anatomical exposure of the abdomen was much clearer compared to our previous experience.

The use of the scope warmer is quite easy. The laparoscope is placed in the sleeve (Figure 2) and the disc at the bottom of the warmer is carefully bent two or three times to start the warming action. Ideally the warmer should be activated about five minutes before the start of surgery, although it only takes about two minutes to warm the entire length of the scope. This is unlike the anti-fog solution which is only effective at the distal end of the scope.

The scope warmers are excellent tools to help a surgeon perform laparoscopy both safely and quickly. In our experience, this is the only effective product that eliminates fogging.

RAJEEV PARAMESWARAN & RICHARD O'HARA

Keywords: Laparoscopic surgery; Product reviews; Surgery, equipment

Tried and tested

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