A Tale of Colostomy Bag in Poor: GI Image

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A 57-year-old woman underwent abdominoperineal resection for rectal growth. She had end colostomy. Initially, she applied medical colostomy bag. During her hospital stay, she used to collect empty containers of intravenous fluids used on her. Nobody enquired for this. On follow-up, she was found to have used these empty containers as colostomy bags. On questioning, it was found out that the poor lady was not in the position to afford colostomy bags for her use.

It has been rightly said that colostomy can be the beginning of a new and healthier life. The quality of life for patients who have undergone total rectal resection for carcinoma is impaired by the artificial intestinal stoma.¹ In developed countries, the selection of colostomy appliance is a personal choice seeking the best and comfortable no matter how costly, but in poor countries, this is plausible. In underdeveloped countries, sometimes, a patient has no desire of even to dream of having modern colostomy appliance. What is affordable for them is demonstrated in this GI image (Figs. 1 and 2). A beautiful design of routinely used intravenous fluid is shown here (Fig. 1). The woman made hole with margins inverted in this plastic bottle for use as appliance for end colostomy (Fig. 2) because she cannot afford to buy colostomy appliance life long. Whether to admire the patient or curse poverty for this idea is undecided, but she has no other option.

Reference

1. Schaube J, Scharf P, Herz R. The quality of life after extirpation of the rectum for carcinoma. *Dtsch Med Wochenschr* 1996;121(6):153–157.

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Figure 1 A makeshift colostomy bag made out of empty container of intravenous fluid.

Figure 2 The woman made a hole with margins inverted in the plastic bottle that served as her colostomy bag.