

The Real Costs of Cotton Blankets



Warmed Cotton Blankets are Clinically Ineffective, Expensive

Surgical personnel that have made numerous trips to the warming cabinet to grab yet another cotton blanket understand that comfort is a core factor in patient warming. The most common method for addressing chilly patients includes the use of several warmed cotton blankets.

Unfortunately, despite their longstanding presence in the perioperative environment, clinicians also realize just how inefficient – and costly – it can be to keep a patient comfortable with cotton. Traditional cotton blankets are passive insulators and only stay warm for a few minutes. When the costs of purchasing, laundering, warming and replacing cotton blankets and gowns are included, it's clear hospitals need a better alternative.

Cotton Blankets are Ineffective

Patients may appreciate the comfort of warmed cotton blankets, but these passive insulators do not provide active warming.¹

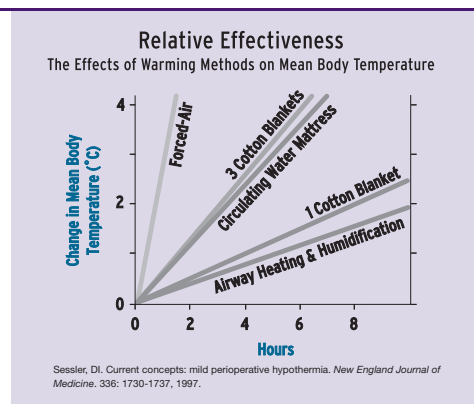
Heat from cotton blankets rapidly dissipates into the environment. In addition, the low heat capacity of cotton means that warming cotton blankets before use makes little difference in terms of maintaining the body's total heat content. Patient heat loss is virtually identical with warmed and unwarmed cotton blankets.²

Increasing the number of blankets covering the patient only slightly decreases heat loss. The reduction in heat loss provided by even three warmed blankets is minimal compared to that provided by active warming.¹

Cotton Blankets are Expensive

According to a survey of 25 U.S. healthcare facilities², the average per-patient cost of cotton blankets is \$9.72.

- The average cost of one cotton blanket, including acquisition and per-laundry use costs, is \$1.08 per use.
- On average, nine cotton blankets are used during the perioperative stay (pre-op through PACU).
- The average lifespan of one cotton blanket is 22 washings, due to wear-and-tear and contamination.
- The average replacement cost for a cotton blanket is \$4.80.
- Additional costs are also associated with cotton blanket use, including the purchase, operation and maintenance/repair of warming cabinets, labor and storage.



The Bair Paws® System: A Smart Alternative

Temperature management ranks at the top of patient concerns according to a survey that found warmth to be the most cited patient complaint.³ Only the Bair Paws system offers comfort and clinical warming options throughout the perioperative period – in one convenient product.

The Bair Paws system offers patient-adjustable warming, allowing patients to adjust the temperature of the air flowing through the gown to a level that’s right for them. This continuous warming addresses two key pre-op patient concerns – feeling cold and being “exposed” by traditional cotton gowns. In addition, warm patients mean your staff makes fewer trips to the blanket warmer and can spend more time on other patient-care matters.

The Bair Paws system can save the costs and hassles of buying, stocking and using a mix of products like warmed cotton blankets, cotton gowns and several kinds of OR warming blankets. Plus, because patients arrive into the OR with forced-air warming built right into the gown, the Bair Paws system offers a great option for achieving normothermia-related quality measures.

Cost per Patient for Cotton Blankets

		Average	Your Cost
Average number of cotton blankets per patient, per procedure		9	_____
Cost of use per cotton blanket	X	\$1.08	X _____
Total cost per patient	=	\$9.72	= _____

Current Gown Kit Creation Costs

The Bair Paws warming gown is available as a kit that includes the warming gown, bonnet, booties, personal belongings bag, and shoe bag. The Bair Paws single-use gown eliminates the time needed to snap, tie and fold a cotton gown. Additionally, the Bair Paws gown kit can save your staff valuable time by eliminating the time needed to gather these supplies.

Current Supply Costs	Cost per item
Gown	\$ _____
1 pair booties	\$ _____
Bonnet	\$ _____
Personal belongings bag	\$ _____
Shoe bag	\$ _____
Total	\$ _____



For additional information or to arrange a demonstration on the Bair Paws system, please call 800-733-7775 or visit us online at www.bairpaws.com.

References:

1. Sessler, DI. Current concepts: mild perioperative hypothermia. *New England Journal of Medicine*. 336: 1730-1737, 1997.
2. Senn G. Some Cold, Hard Facts About Warmed Cotton Blankets. *Surgical Services Management*. June 2002; 8: 19-25.
3. Wilson. L. Kolcaba, K. Practical Application of Comfort Theory in the Perianesthesia Setting, *Journal of PeriAnesthesia Nursing*. June 2004; 164-173.