



Report of Surgical Community Engagement in Veracruz, Mexico

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In Veracruz, Mexico, various populations encounter vulnerability due to multiple risk factors. Notably, limited access to information and education exacerbates these risks, increasing potential future complications. In response, we have focused our efforts on educating the community about essential health practices, such as basic postoperative care, proper wound management, early signs of infection recognition, and effective preventative measures.

Our educational initiatives have been deployed across diverse community settings, including schools, restaurants, health fairs, and healthcare centers, with a focus on critical health management topics. For example, at MONAT Restaurant, a local fast-food chain, we trained 56 employees on hygiene and infection prevention relevant to food service, along with wound care. This session featured an informational presentation followed by an interactive workshop, where participants also received basic first aid kits.

In the educational sector, we visited two elementary schools where we presented to 40 teachers on wound prevention and care. These sessions equipped educators with vital knowledge for managing injuries, enhancing safety for themselves and their students.

At a health fair in Mata Cocuite, a small locality in Veracruz, we engaged 40 locals in a discussion on wound care and demonstrated how to dress minor wounds, offering practical, evidence-based advice for daily scenarios.

Additionally, we collaborated with local government and visited the Sistema para el Desarrollo Integral de la Familia (DIF) Ruiz Cortines, a public center focused on protecting vulnerable populations. There, we spoke with 80 individuals, predominantly elderly, about wound care. This session was interactive and included a raffle of first aid kits, which was well-received, as evidenced by active participation and questions. At AMANC, the Mexican Childhood Cancer Association, we adapted our discussion for 20 adults and children, focusing on identifying common causes of wounds at home, making the session highly didactic to accommodate the children's involvement. It was particularly rewarding to observe the children's precise and safe approach to wound care.

Furthermore, we partnered with Sempra, an international corporation with over 80 employees in Veracruz, which focuses on providing safe and sustainable access to cleaner energy. Our discussions there centered on preventing and managing wound infections, critical for industries facing occupational hazards and often located far from medical facilities.

We encountered a range of beliefs and practices, from workers advocating diesel as a wound treatment to elderly individuals using laundry soap to clean wounds. Nonetheless, there was a keen interest and active participation in learning better and evidence based ways of wound care at each session.

Our team remains committed to nurturing a culture of education and support within the Veracruz community. We aim to continue our initiatives to enhance the health



and well-being of its residents through collaborative efforts, empowering individuals with the knowledge and resources necessary for healthier living and informed health decisions. By fostering a supportive environment, we aspire to cultivate a community where everyone can thrive and flourish. Together, we will persist in our pursuit of a healthier future for all in Veracruz.

References

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