

MANAGEMENT OF PAIN IN PATIENTS WITH CHRONIC WOUNDS

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Management of pain remains an important challenge for many patients with chronic wounds. It is complex and multi-factorial with clinical and psychosocial issues influencing its impact. Management strategies are dependent on comprehensive assessment of pain and may require access to pain specialist teams in intractable cases. This presentation will use 3 case studies to discuss the integration of treatment strategies that may be required for effective management. Recent position documents on wound pain have provided a useful framework to consider these issues whilst recognising that each plan must meet the individual needs of the patient. Many patients suffer background pain that may relate directly to the wound and its underlying aetiology. Additional pain from other clinical problems may not be directly related to the wound but can significantly influence the overall pain experience. Treatment requires addressing local factors influencing the wound such as control of oedema or treatment of cellulitis. Psychosocial issues include understanding the emotional issues associated with the pain and factors that are influencing treatment tolerance. While analgesia is frequently prescribed it often used inappropriately and without review. In addition to drugs recommended in the WHO pain ladder neuropathic pain requires different medication. The relationship between professional and patient are critical in achieving relief and in prescribing holistic care that can be managed by the patient and family.