

THE EFFECT OF PAIN ON THE INDIVIDUAL: THE IMPORTANCE OF MEASUREMENT

Patricia Price,

Cardiff University

Chronic wound pain is not well understood and the literature is limited. Six out of 10 venous leg ulcer patients experience pain with their ulcer, and similar trends are observed for other chronic wounds. Chronic wound pain is more than just pain at dressing change, and can lead to depression and the feelings of constant tiredness. Pain related to the wound should be handled as one of the main priorities in chronic wound management together with addressing the cause. Holistic management must be based on a safe and effective mix of psychosocial approaches together with local and systemic pain management. If you start with the premise that all wounds are painful until proven otherwise, then the importance of good wound and pain assessment leading to accurate wound diagnosis is vital. Many aspects of local wound management, if dealt with swiftly and appropriately, can lead to a reduction in the patient's pain experience – for example, resolution of infection or reduction in inflammation. This presentation will aim to increase the healthcare professional's awareness that of the impact of persistent wound related pain on everyday life; and will include information on the importance of appropriate and frequent pain assessment. Unless wound pain is optimally managed both patient suffering and costs to healthcare systems will increase.