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## INCREASED QUALITY OF LIFE WITH THE HELP OF A UNIQUE POLYMERIC MEMBRANE DRESSING

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A 97 year old lady with advanced Alzheimer's disease suffered from a two month old malodorous painful pressure ulcer on her trochanter. Due to her low intake of food and lack of mobility, her condition was deteriorating rapidly. The daily dressing changes done by the home care nurses took at least two nurses several hours due to her spasticity, and they appeared to cause the patient a considerable amount of pain and distress. Her husband could no longer care for her at home so she was hospitalized.

**Aim:** The initial goal was to increase nutrition intake, minimize the pain which caused significant spasticity and reduce the odour of the wound. Healing was not even considered an option due to the patient's overall condition.

**Method:** Polymeric membrane dressings were initiated in the hospital because they inhibit the nociceptors, which can greatly diminish wound pain and resultant spasticity. They are non-adherent, have the ability to donate or absorb moisture as needed and contain a built-in wound cleanser. Protein was supplemented orally.

**Result:** The choice of dressing decreased the time it took to change the dressing because no manual wound cleansing or rinsing was needed during dressing change. After two weeks the pain and odour had disappeared and the patient's spasticity was significantly reduced, greatly simplifying her care. After two months the patient could be sent home to her husband again. The home care nurses were instructed on how to use polymeric membrane dressings.

**Discussion:** A combination of nutrition intake and daily dressing changes with polymeric membrane dressings managed to reduce pain and odour in the wound to the extent that the patient could go back to living at home with her husband again. As an extra bonus the wound actually closed after four months of treatment with the polymeric membrane dressings.