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NON-HEALING WOUNDS: THE GERIATRIC APPROACH

Efraim Jaul

Herzog Hospital affiliated Hebrew University, Jerusalem, Israel

Background: Many of the common types of non-healing wounds fall under four categories: pressure ulcers, diabetic ulcers, ischemic ulcers and venous ulcers.

Many of them develop among the elderly, becoming non-healing to the extent that the patient may live with them all of his life, or even die because of them.

Aims: A geriatric point of view, and how to deal with non-healing ulcer as a geriatric syndrome.

Methods: Evaluation of the patient and the wound should be undertaken. Those include the patient's co-morbidities, functional state (ADL), nutritional status, social support, ethical beliefs and the quality of life. The wound include grade of tissue

involvement, size, bacterial profile, amount of exudate, odor and location.

Results: The geriatric approach to a non-healing wound is comprehensive and multidisciplinary. Each discipline (the nursing staff, physician, dietitian, occupational, physical therapists and social worker) has its own task in preventing and treating such wounds.

Conclusion: As long as wounds are not healing, the ultimate goal therefore has been altered from healing of the wounds to symptom control, prevention of complications and to contribute to the patient's overall wellbeing.