

## HYPERBARIC OXYGEN THERAPY ( HBOT) AS ADJUNCTIVE THERAPY IN TREATMENT OF NECROTIZING SOFT TISSUE INFECTIONS

Suzana Pecenkovic-Mihovilovic

*Polyclinic for baromedicine OXY, Pula, Croatia*

**Aim:** Bacterial infections of the skin and underlying soft tissues are among the most common complaints encountered in emergency medicine and in acute ambulatory care settings, and they should be treated as an acute medical and surgical emergency. These infections are usually necrotizing and occur in traumatic or surgical wounds, around foreign bodies; they affect patients who are compromised by underlying systemic disease, such as diabetes mellitus, vascular insufficiency, or both, alcoholism, malignancies, etc. Anaerobic soft tissue infections (STI) are still life threatening infections. The purpose of this poster presentation is to present our experiences through four clinical cases about benefit of early use of HBOT with standard therapy.

**Methods:** 4 patients with STI (2 in perigenital region, 1 in facial and 1 in foot and leg region) were treated with HBOT as adjunct therapy to surgical and antibiotics therapy. Wound healing was documented with digital photography.

**Results:** In the beginning patients were treated only with surgical and antibiotics therapy. After including HBOT in treatment protocol there was significant improvement of clinical status (general and local) in all four patients.

**Conclusion:** Early surgical exploration is the keystone to successful treatment and diagnosis. Appropriate management requires a team approach, and right there, between intensive, repeated surgical debridement and broad-spectrum antibiotics, adjunctive intensive hyperbaric oxygen therapy (HBOT) appears to offer some advantages in management of soft tissue infections.