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BIOFILM IN CHRONIC WOUNDS

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A biofilm can be described as a microbial colony encased in a polysaccharide matrix which can become attached to a wound surface (Bjarnsholt et al, 2008). This can affect the healing potential of chronic wounds due to the production of destructive enzymes and toxins which can promote a chronic inflammatory state within the wound. This can be poly-microbial and can result in delayed wound healing, chronic infection which is resistant to antibiotics leading to prolonged hospitalisation for some patients. There appears to be a correlation between biofilms and non-healing in chronic wounds (Harding et al, 2008). A hypothesis that is current but needs refinement is that biofilms are a major player in the chronicity of wounds (Singh & Barbul, 2008).

In developing this novel poster a literature search was conducted using the following databases: Cochrane, Cinahl, PubMed and HMIC.

The poster examines the following aspects of a biofilm,

- Definition of a biofilm
- Characteristics of biofilms
- Diagnosis
- Implication to wound care and
- Treatment options available

Biofilms are recognised by some professionals within wound care. They are a complex concept to diagnose and treat as there is limited evidence for biofilm based wound care. This poster aims to raise awareness of the process to detect and treat a biofilm within a complex wound.

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