



AWA
Austrian
Wound Association

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Bulletin from the corporate congress of the AWA (Austria) and the SAfW (Switzerland) in Bregenz

The annual general meeting of the **Austrian Wound Association (AWA)** was held for the first time in July 2007 in cooperation with the Swiss wound association (SAfW) in Bregenz. The main topic was "holistic wound care". The head of the SAfW, Mr. Dr. Läubli from Zürich opened the event by saying that through closer cooperation, synergy and diversity can be achieved more simply. In his following lecture, Mr. Läubli presented some alternative methods in wound care. Alternative therapies should have proven effectiveness, have few adverse effects and should be cost effective. There are few randomized controlled studies, but we should be aware of those that exist, review them critically and present them in the context of surveys of research in order to guarantee modern wound treatment.

Mr. Dr. Schenk from Vienna gave a presentation on hyperbaric oxygen. In this procedure the partial pressure of oxygen in patients' blood is raised so that the metabolism in bradytrophic tissue is stimulated. This leads to the release of growth factors. Growth factors induce angio and tissue regeneration. Although the pathophysiology for this process is secured scientifically, it is still not possible to make claims for this treatment from health insurance companies.

Mr. Kammerlander from Embrach presented a survey about laser technology in the healing process of tooth implants, which can also be used in healing chronic wounds and hypertrophic scars. However, in this case further trials are also needed.

Mrs. Dr. Esch from Hamburg talked about how ultrasound can be used to gently clean off necrotic tissue and other layers from wounds.

Finally, Prof. Zöch from Vienna gave a presentation about shock waves as an alternative method. In the discussion, it was stressed that alternative methods are additional therapies and should be used in combination with other forms of therapy.

A presentation was given in the afternoon entitled "Nutrition and wound healing". Regrettably, not enough attention is paid to this topic in routine clinical care.

Mr. Dr. Imoberdorf from Winterthur talked about the context of nutrition and wound healing as well as the loss of weight and the development of diabetic foot ulcers.

Mr. Dr. Wild from Vienna gave a presentation on the complication in wound healing as well as the higher infection rate which is caused by malnutrition. 20-60% of the patients who come to hospitals are already suffering from malnutrition. That is why they have a higher risk of developing a wound healing insufficiency. Because of this situation, a consistent documentary from doctors and nurses is extremely important. Therefore, the nutrogram which was invented by Prof. Seiler is an ideal tool to ascertain the state of nutrition from a patient.

On Saturday, it was all about germinal wounds. Prof. Jansen from Mainz presented some dangerous Germs in wounds. Besides overriding grampositive pathogens, there are some gramnegative bacteria which lead to wound infection and so disturb normal wound healing.

Prim. Strohal from Feldkirch talked about MRSA infections. While treating MRSA no systemic antibiotics should be used. The intention to treat is to use appropriate antiseptics and to secure basic hygienic standards.

Prof. Seipp from Gießen talked about surveys concerning wound irrigation dilutions and hose effect against bio films.

Mr. Dr. Münster from Hamburg presented the history of treating infected wounds. Early historical traditions for treating infected wounds go back till 2.200 years B.C. Already the medicine of the Egyptians and in the Middle Ages describe therapy forms for treating wounds. For more than 40 years, moist wound treatment is the central point of interest in modern treating concepts.

The afternoon was all about wound documentation. Prim. Strohal presented a concept for Vorarlberg containing a virtual centre which collects and holds all the information about the wound documentation and instantly provides the data to the attending nurse or doctor. By the use of this system, the resident doctor is able to get information faster about examinations made in hospitals for example and so is able to adapt his treatment concept for the patient.

Mr. Bindschedler from Suhr held a lecture about digital wound documentation. The best way is to combine photo documentation with wound measurement documentation and documentation of the progress. In Germany, wound documentation is statutory since 2006. It is not the case in Austria and Switzerland. The End of the congress was formed in a round table discussion about the topic "holistic wound care – what is state of the art?" It was underlined that above all, topics like documentation and integration are still at the very beginning. A great potential for development is to be seen here. Also there is still a lack of evidence based information. That is why the topic 'holistic wound treatment' is going to be important in the future. Patient's pain and mental health should also be concerned. Prof. Zöch once more talked about public relations and about reaching a broad audience concerning the state of knowledge in wound treatment.

As a result, it was underlined that a cooperate congress of AWA and SAfW will be organised again in a few years in order to secure that different experiences for common therapy concepts are shared.

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