

CHRONIC WOUND

(Bed Sore, Diabetic Wound, Venous Stasis Ulcers)

Definition: A chronic wound is generally a wound that doesn't start to heal within four weeks or hasn't healed within eight weeks. 3,7,9

Causes: A chronic wound results when the normal reparative process is interrupted. While underlying causes of chronic wounds vary from patient to patient, they tend to occur in patients with poor blood circulation, diabetes, or for other reasons related to a patient's condition. Pressure ulcers (sometimes called 'bed sores'), for example, can develop in patients who are confined to bed, and can evolve into chronic wounds. Likewise, for a person with diabetes, a simple foot blister may result in a chronic open sore, serious infection, gangrene, and may even require amputation. 2,3,6,9,10



PRESSURE ULCER AT SACRUM DIABETIC WOUND AT FOOT WHIRLPOOL THERAPY

Affected People/Population: Persons with diabetes are at greatest risk. Up to 15 percent of the estimated 17 million Americans with diabetes may suffer from chronic wounds, most commonly non-healing foot sores, which can lead to amputation. The remaining percentage of chronic wounds result from pressure ulcers, peripheral neuropathy (nerve disorders affecting the hands or feet), peripheral vascular disorders (impeding blood circulation), arterial occlusive disease (causes blockages in major arteries), radiation, and osteomyelitis (infection of the bones).1,3,6,10

Medications: Antibiotics are given to control infections. Dressings are applied to protect the wound area. An ideal dressing should protect the wound, be biocompatible, and provide ideal hydration. The cardinal rule is to keep the ulcer tissue moist and the surrounding intact skin dry. Other medications are given depending on the other diseases of the patient.3,4,5,6,10

Surgery: Surgery is usually indicated in grade 4-5 pressure ulcers. Surgical management Includes: sharp debridement (use of scalpel to clean wound area) , direct closure, skin grafting, skin flaps, musculocutaneous flaps and free flaps.2,3,6

Physical Therapy: Physical therapy is an integral part of wound care. Treatment includes whirlpool, infrared radiation, ultraviolet light, hyperbaric oxygen and ultrasound. The treatment aims to aid tissue healing, reduce infection, remove dead tissue and reduce pain .2,3,6,8,10

References:

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