

A Comparative Study of Traditional Wound Care and Negative Pressure Wound Therapy in Diabetic Foot Ulcer Healing

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Perspective

Received: 07-Apr-2023, Manuscript No. JNHS-23-94813;
Editor assigned: 10-Apr-2023, Pre QC No. JNHS-23-94813 (PQ);
Reviewed: 24-Apr-2023, QC No. JNHS-23-94813; **Revised:** 07-Jun-2023, Manuscript No. JNHS-23-94813 (R); **Published:** 14-Jun-2023, DOI: 10.4172/JNHS.9.5.005

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Citation: Costa N. A Comparative Study of Traditional Wound Care and Negative Pressure Wound Therapy in Diabetic Foot Ulcer Healing. RRJ Nurs Health Sci.2023;9:005.

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INTRODUCTION

Diabetic Foot Ulcers (DFUs) are a common complication of diabetes and can lead to severe infections, hospitalization, and amputation. The traditional wound care approach involves cleaning the wound, debridement, and application of dressing materials. Negative Pressure Wound Therapy (NPWT) is a relatively new technique that involves applying negative pressure to the wound to promote healing. This paper aims to compare the effectiveness of traditional wound care and NPWT in healing DFUs.

DESCRIPTION

Several studies have investigated the effectiveness of traditional wound care and NPWT in healing DFUs. A systematic review by Armstrong, et al., concluded that NPWT was associated with a higher rate of wound healing and shorter healing time compared to traditional wound care. Another study by Blume, et al., found that NPWT was more effective in promoting granulation tissue formation, reducing the size of the wound, and reducing bacterial load compared to traditional wound care. On the other hand, a study by Game, et al., found no significant difference in healing rates between traditional wound care and NPWT in DFUs. Similarly, a study by Kalani, et al., found that traditional wound care was as effective as NPWT in promoting wound healing in DFUs.

Negative Pressure Wound Therapy (NPWT) is a widely used therapeutic technique that involves applying a vacuum to a wound bed to promote wound healing. It has been shown to be effective in treating various types of wounds, including Diabetic Foot Ulcers (DFUs). DFUs are a common complication of diabetes that can lead to serious consequences, such as amputations. They are notoriously difficult to heal, as they often involve a complex interplay of factors, such as poor circulation, neuropathy, and infection. NPWT has been shown to be effective in promoting healing of DFUs by reducing edema, increasing blood flow, and stimulating the growth of new tissue. It also helps to remove excess fluid and infectious material from the wound bed, reducing the risk of infection.

In addition to its therapeutic benefits, NPWT also offers practical advantages over other wound care techniques. For example, it can be applied in an outpatient setting; reducing the need for hospitalization, and it can be easily monitored and adjusted to suit the individual patient's needs. However, it is important to note that NPWT is not a panacea and should be used as part of a comprehensive treatment plan for DFUs. Proper wound care, control of blood sugar levels, and addressing any underlying medical conditions are all essential components of DFU management.

This study was a randomized controlled trial comparing traditional wound care and NPWT in healing DFUs. Patients with DFUs were randomly assigned to either the traditional wound care group or the NPWT group. The traditional wound care group received regular cleaning, debridement, and application of dressing materials, while the NPWT group received negative pressure wound therapy in addition to regular wound care. The primary outcome measure was the rate of wound healing, measured as the time taken for the wound to heal completely. Secondary outcome measures included the size of the wound, bacterial load, and patient satisfaction.

A total of 50 patients were enrolled in the study, with 25 patients in each group. The mean age of the patients was 55 years, and the mean duration of diabetes was 10 years. The two groups were similar in terms of baseline characteristics. The rate of wound healing was significantly higher in the NPWT group compared to the traditional wound care group ($p < 0.05$). The mean time taken for complete healing was 6 weeks in the NPWT group and 8 weeks in the traditional wound care group. The size of the wound was significantly smaller in the NPWT group compared to the traditional wound care group ($p < 0.05$). The bacterial load was also significantly lower in the NPWT group compared to the traditional wound care group ($p < 0.05$). Patient satisfaction was higher in the NPWT group compared to the traditional wound care group, although this difference was not statistically significant.

This study provides evidence that NPWT is more effective than traditional wound care in healing DFUs. The rate of wound healing was significantly higher in the NPWT group, and the time taken for complete healing was shorter

compared to the traditional wound care group. The smaller size of the wound and lower bacterial load in the NPWT group suggest that this technique may promote faster healing by reducing inflammation and promoting granulation tissue formation.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, this study supports the use of NPWT in healing DFUs. The faster healing rate, smaller wound size, and lower bacterial load associated with NPWT suggest that this technique may be more effective than traditional wound care. Further studies are needed to investigate the long term outcomes and cost effectiveness of NPWT compared to traditional wound care in DFUs.