Therapy and prevention of pressure ulcers in paraplegics

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Abstract

Decubital ulcers still represent a serious health care problem worldwide with tens of thousands of new cases every year. Specific vulnerability to this disease entity is seen due to the interaction of external (e.g., pressure, shear, contusion) and internal factors (e.g., fever, malnutrition, endothelial dysfunction) as well as faulty prophylaxis and therapy. The treatment of pressure ulcers as a typical complication after traumatic spinal cord injury still poses a great challenge to physicians worldwide. Despite increasing scientific interest, the persistent incidence rates still give cause for reassessment of established procedures. In this review, the different options of risk assessment, such as the different treatment regimens and prophylaxis, will be discussed along with the underlying pathophysiology.

The present work should provide an overview of newly established and possible future treatment options and discuss them in view of current experimental and clinical research. Primarily, we highlighted the question of possible optimizations and adaptations of existing approaches to improve the long-term prognosis of pressure ulcers in patients with traumatic spinal cord injury. Even more important is the question of transferring the evaluation of collections of individual findings in their entirety into an evidence-based, standardized and simultaneously individualized therapeutic procedure. Undoubtedly, findings from both experimental and clinical research, especially in their individual interaction, will increasingly find their way into future individualized, standardized monitoring and therapy concepts.

Keywords: bedsores, prophylaxis, paraplegia, spinal cord injury

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