Implementation of Complex Therapy Concepts in Treatment of Venous Leg Ulcers

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Introduction

In case of chronic leg ulcers, successful healing cannot be achieved without a carefully designed concept of therapy, consisting of compression therapy and moist wound treatment. While there is a general consensus that successful healing needs optimized interactions of all treatments, complex therapy concepts are not consistently implemented in daily practice.

Aim

In an effort to gain further experience in the implementation of complex therapy concepts for treatment of leg ulcers in medical practice, 29 patients with chronic leg ulcers of venous and mixed aetiology were treated with compression therapy and moist wound dressings under conditions of routine medical care.

Methods

The multicentre post-marketing product evaluation was conducted on a non-interventional basis at several study-experienced phlebology practices and wound care centres in Germany. Patient age varied between 41 and 87 years. All patients had an ankle-brachial index (ABI) greater than 0.8. None of the patients showed any signs of arterial occlusive disease. In 44.8% of all cases the BMI was > 28 kg/m² (obesity). The majority of the patients had additional risk factors e.g. allergies.

Every patient had at least one chronic ulcer. The size of the ulcers varied from 10 to 90 mm in length, and from 5 to 98 mm in width at baseline (mean value ± standard deviation: length: 28.3 ± 21.6 mm, width: 16.7 ± 16.8 mm, resulting wound surface area: 5.1 ± 12.0 cm²). In 34.5% of all patients, wound treatment had been applied prior to this observational study. The ulcers were treated from 6 - 12 weeks depending on individual patient status and progress of wound healing. At the beginning of the study 11 patients were suffering from severe oedema, which had to be reduced by application of Comprilan® short stretch compression bandages (BSN medical GmbH). Comprilan® short stretch compression bandages (BSN medical GmbH) were applied with the advanced moist wound dressing Cutimed® Siltec® /B. In case of any signs of infection, Cutimed® Sorbact® was placed immediately onto the wound, and covered with Cutimed® Siltec®. After oedema reduction all patients were treated with a standardised combination of BSN-JOBST® Custom fit UlcerCARE™ compression system (BSN-Jobst GmbH) and moist wound management with the Cutimed® Siltec® silicone foam dressing (BSN medical GmbH).

Results

- In 72.4% of all cases the wound size reduced by 43.8% to 92.4% (Reduction of the wound size by app. 44% - 92%).
- In 51.7% of all cases the wound healed completely.
- Progress in wound healing occurred in case of chronic ulcers, which were already treated without success. The majority of patients had not experienced any progress in healing for extended periods of time due to their complicate health situation (e.g. underlying disease, adiposity, signs of infection, pronounced redness of the wound edges).
- Significant improvement of the wound status or even complete healing of the wound in case of sign of infection (48% of the cases) and reddening of the wound edges (93% of the cases).
- The therapy could be successfully implemented without the use of any antibiotics by using Cutimed® Sorbact®.
- Patients who had worn compression stockings before perceived the compression system as a great relief, and superior to traditional standard stockings. The patients’ well-being was substantially improved which led to a high degree of patient compliance.
- In combination with the compression system the wound care products, were found to be patient-friendly and well tolerated in actual practice.
- Patients and physicians would use the products Cutimed® Sorbact®, Cutimed® Siltec® silicone foam dressing and BSN-JOBST® Custom fit UlcerCARE™ compression system again.
- The therapy concept was rated very positively by the physicians as well as by the patients.

Conclusions

It can be concluded that the use of a practical combination therapy (moist wound management and compression therapy) was successful. A comprehensive, well-rounded range of mutually compatible compression and wound care products facilitates the specific choice and easy application of each product within the scope of any therapy concept. This, as well as the close monitoring and guidance of the patients through all scheduled visits, resulted in a high degree of patient satisfaction and compliance.

Work was supported by BSN medical GmbH. BSN-JOBST® Custom fit UlcerCARE™ compression system

Canadian Association of Wound Care annual conference in Ottawa, Ontario, from November 3rd to 6th 2011.