COPING STRATEGIES USED BY PATIENTS WITH CHRONIC AND OR COMPLEX WOUNDS

Jori Vermeiden, Louk P. Van Doorn, Pascal Steenvoorde, J. Oskam

Rijnland Hospital Leiderdorp, Leiderdorp, Netherlands

Aim: The aim of this study was to gain more insight in the coping strategies used by patients with chronic complex wounds. Psychosocial issues play an important role in the healing process of a wound. Having a wound can cause a stressful situation for the patient and his or her environment.

Method: To observe the coping strategies used by patients with chronic complex wounds the Utrecht Coping List (UCL) was used. This list is made up of 47 questions divided in seven different scales, each being a coping strategy. The Mini-Mental State Examination (MMSE) was used to assess the patients' cognitive functioning. Forty patients were randomly selected for this study. The diagnoses were divided into five different groups: diabetic ulcers, venous ulcers, surgical wounds, pressure ulcers, and trauma wounds.

Results: Both scores for men (n=18) and women (n=11) differ from the UCL norm group. On average, patients with a diabetic ulcer scored lower on the scales and the patients with venous leg ulcers scored higher. An obvious difference was found in the MMSE score and the coping strategy used.

Conclusion/discussion: From this study it can be said that participating patients had different coping strategies. To improve the quality of care given to the patients more psychosocial support could be given or offered by clinicians. Further research has to be done to be able to say that specific coping strategies have a positive influence on wound healing.