PYODERMA GANGRENOSUM - A CAUSE OF HARD-TO-HEAL LEG ULCERS

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Aim: to highlight a rare, although not unusual cause of hard-to-heal leg ulcers, in order to improve the treatment's efficiency

Methods: The paper presents the case of a 34 years-old woman, admitted in the Department of Plastic Surgery, the Emergency Clinical Hospital Bucharest for an extremely painful, gigantic, recurrent ulcer of the right calf associated with ulcerative colitis. We promoted the debridement and the granulation of the wound by using moist wound therapy. The patient received Sulfasalazine and, when necessary, systemic antibiotherapy.

The wound assessment criteria were: the severity of pain, the quality of granulation tissue and of reepithelialisation, the severity of leg oedema, the bacterial contamination of the wound.

Results: Modern chronic wound management using selected dressing and compression therapy permitted us to cover with skin grafts a large defect of about 7% TBSA in a relatively short time (6 weeks). However, the skin graft broke down and the ulcer reappeared within the first three months. The patient was diagnosed with Pyoderma Gangrenosum and received immunosuppressants.

Conclusion: Hard-to-heal leg ulcers are serious health issues and they are due to a multitude of factors, such as ulcer’s size, associated illnesses, poor leg mobility, low compliance to therapy. Nevertheless, doctors should always keep in mind immune-mediated disease such as Pyoderma Gangrenosum whenever they are dealing with recurrent ulcers despite appropriate wound care.