

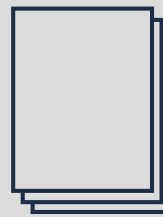
Electrical stimulation for pain reduction in hard-to-heal wound healing

Despite treatment advances over the past 30 years, the societal impact of chronic wounds is increasingly burdensome. An unresolved issue is wound pain which can make many treatments such as compression in venous leg ulcers intolerable.

Objective:

The aim of this review, published in the Journal of Wound Care, was to present the evidence and stimulate thinking on the use of electrical stimulation (ES) devices as a treatment technology with the potential to reduce pain, improve compliance and thus chronic wound outcomes.

Method:

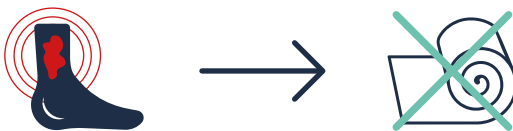


Literature search was carried out to identify the impact of ES on chronic wound outcomes, including pain.

Results:

1. Wound pain is a barrier

to patient compliance with some gold standard treatments including compression.



Current options for pain management are not always effective. New approaches are needed.

2. ES reduces pain

7 peer reviewed papers reported a reduction in chronic wound pain with ES:

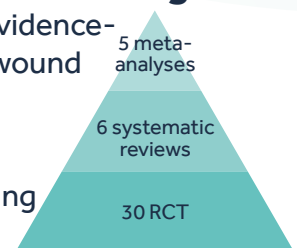
- a rapid and prolonged reduction in chronic wound pain was observed
- reduced analgesia needed



3. ES also accelerates healing

ES is one of the most evidence-based technologies in wound management. ES:

- reduces wound area
- increases rate of healing



New formats of ES may be more convenient to use:

- Despite a wealth of evidence, ES has not yet been adopted into everyday practice
- Some features of ES devices may have hampered adoption in the past
- As new devices become available, these barriers are being overcome, e.g. small size, portable, pre-programmed devices

As new, pocket-sized, portable devices allowing convenient patient treatment and better patient compliance become more widely available, the evidence suggests that electrical stimulation should be used to treat painful chronic wounds.