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ABSTRACT BOOK

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Effect of scar treatment products on unpleasant physical manifestations in patients suffering from extensive burn scarring

Lead author: *Dr. med. Hans Ziegenthaler*

Moritz Clinic, Burns Rehabilitation centre, Hermann-Sachse-Str. 46, 07639 Bad Klosterlausnitz

Purpose:

Scars lack endogenous sebaceous glands, which means that they do not have a physiological fatty coating to protect the tissue against acid. Consequently, the scarring process is accompanied by unpleasant physical manifestations such as itching, tightness, dryness and flaking, the subjective perception of which varies from one individual to another. The aim of our investigation is to ascertain how far the effect of scar treatment products in the early stages of scar formation during rehabilitation can be measured.

Patients and methods:

15 patients with burn injuries taking part in an in-patient rehabilitation programme (five to eight weeks after their accident) were observed as part of a clinical treatment observation study. The patients all had healed scar tissue patches on the trunk and limbs which flaked quite severely, felt tight and/or itched both at rest and while the patient was moving. Wound care was generally given every day, in some cases more than once a day, using the proven product SR Unguentum cordes. After inflammatory factors had been ruled out, those patients who were continuing to experience itching and a sensation of tightness exceeding 50% on an intensity scale were switched to ALHYDRAN® cream. The state of the scars was assessed using the Vancouver Scar Scale at point T0, T1 (14 days later) and T2 (a further 14 days later). At these points photographs were taken, medication requirements (analgesics, neuroleptics, antihistamines) were noted, patients' pain perception according to the VAS scale was recorded and their health-related quality of life (SF 36) was ascertained. The Pationnaire® questionnaire, which had never previously been used with burns patients, was also employed (this questionnaire investigates various everyday and injury-specific items). The trial group was too small for statistical assessment, so the findings were assessed by means of descriptions and photographs.

Findings:

A marked improvement compared to the baseline was observed in the subjective categories assessed, particularly itching and a sensation of tightness. However, the treatment group, the period investigated and the absence of randomisation make it impossible to reach any more far-reaching conclusions than an observation of change. No adverse effects were reported. On the other hand, convincing application properties in the burns patient group were indicated by the Pationnaire® questionnaire, which had previously been used only in the context of injuries to the supporting and locomotor systems but which now has a skin module.

Conclusions:

ALHYDRAN® appears to be able to minimise manifestations such as itching and a sensation of tightness, which patients find very distressing, in the early stages of scar formation. This form of scar treatment is well tolerated and can easily be combined with the administration of textile-based compression therapy. We intend to conduct a clinical study with a larger randomised group and a follow-up after three months in order to obtain findings suitable for statistical analysis.