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Knowledge, compliance and limitations in activities of daily living of patients with venous leg ulcers undergoing compression bandaging

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The aim of this preliminary study is to assess the knowledge of patients regarding venous leg ulcers, compliance for the treatment method and limitations in activities of daily living (ADL) and to identify the problems associated with ADL in patients undergoing compression bandaging and the common causes for non-compliance. A descriptive cross-sectional design was used. A semi structured, interviewer-administered-questionnaire was used to collect data from patients undergoing compression bandaging treatment at the Ulcer Clinic in the Colombo South Teaching Hospital for more than two weeks. All the patients who attended the Ulcer Clinic during a period of 2 months from 15th September to 15th November 2009 were recruited. Data were collected from a period sample of 50 patients who fulfilled the inclusion criteria. A knowledge score was used to assess the levels of knowledge and another score was used to assess the levels of limitation in ADL. The possible range of knowledge score was 0 to 12. Levels of knowledge were categorized as 0-3 (Poor), 4-6 (Satisfactory), 7-9 (Good) and 10-12 (Very Good). The possible range of score for limitations of ADL was 11 to 44. Levels of limitation were categorized as 11-21 (No limitations), 22-28 (Minimal limitations), 29-35 (Moderate limitations) and 35-44 (High limitations).

Among the participants, 92% (n = 46) had a 'Very Good' to 'Good' level of knowledge and 8% (n = 4) had a 'Satisfactory' level of knowledge about their disease condition, method of treatment and practices associated with venous leg ulcers. It was noted that not a single patient had a 'Poor' level of knowledge. Sixty four percent (n = 32) of the participants were compliant and 36% (n = 18) were non compliant to compression bandaging. Twenty two percent (n = 11) of participants had a 'minimal' level of limitations, 40% (n = 20) had a 'moderate' level of limitations and 38% (n = 19) had a 'high' level of limitations for activities of daily living during the period of treatment. The findings highlighted that most of the patients with venous leg ulcers had a 'Very Good' or 'Good' level of knowledge. A majority of the patients were compliant for compression bandaging. Patients should be encouraged to increase compliance to treatment, particularly those who are non-compliant for compression bandages. The study revealed that all participants had some level of limitations of activities of daily living.

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