

The Effects of Manuka Honey on Ulcer Healing-By Courtney Botting

Based on the research question: “ What are the healing properties of Manuka Honey and is this beneficial in promoting healing in ulcers?”

Introduction

Wound management is a vital component of nursing care. Nurses are often made responsible for the management of ulcer care and their attitudes and knowledge are essential in creating a efficacious treatment plan (Hollinworth, 2009). During a clinical placement at a rest home care facility I noticed that many patients who had non-healing ulcers were being dressed with occlusive dressings while Manuka honey dressings were rarely used. This made me question how Manuka honey dressings work, what the advantages of using them would be and whether they are effective in the treatment of ulcers. This is a highly relevant topic as New Zealand has an aging population and ulcers have been found to primarily affect older adults and those who are bed bound causing reduced mobility, social isolation, pain, poor quality of life and depression (Tweed & Weatherall, 2006).

Manuka Honey Dressings:

Manuka Honey dressings are impregnated with an active form of medical grade honey which provides antibacterial protection doing so via osmotic desloughing and in turn controls and eliminates malodour. An ideal healing environment is achieved when a honey gel complex is formed after the ulcers exudate mixes with the honey (Coulbourn, Hampton, & Tadej, 2009).



Healing Properties of Manuka Honey:

- Effective in deodorising wounds (Gethin & Cowman, 2005).
- Primarily works during the inflammation stage of wound healing to repair damaged intestinal mucosa, stimulate tissue growth and collagen synthesis, creates blood vessel development in the ulcer bed and has anti-inflammatory properties (Mandal & Mandal, 2011).
- Offers a moist healing environment that clears infection, reduces oedema, removes exudate and is of a high viscosity providing a barrier to infection (Jenkins, 2008).
- Has a bacteria killing action which destroys macrophages therefore reducing tissue destruction and inflammation.
- Manuka honey is effective in de-sloughing the ulcer. The osmotic effect draws fluid from the deeper tissue and facilitates autolysis (self- digestion of destructive tissue) (Al-Waili, Salom, & Al-Ghamdi, 2011).

Potential Side Effects:

- Topical application may lead to impermanent stinging in some patients.
- Pain associated to acidity may be experienced by some patients, however healing still occurs when pain is endured (Gethin & Cowman, 2005). In most cases pain subsides within 10 minutes.

Rationale:

A systematic review of the literature provides evidence that Manuka honey has been identified as a successful and cost effective treatment for ulcers. By applying Manuka honey dressings to ulcers this will decrease the risk of infection, the need for ongoing analgesia, effects of reduced mobility and expenses associated with ulcer treatment. Manuka honey is relatively free of adverse effects, by using Manuka honey dressings patients will have a shorter period of treatment due to its efficacy therefore reducing strain on the health team and costs associated with treatment (Keelaghan, Margolis, Zhan & Baumgarten, 2010).

Recommendations:

- That patients should be given the option of having Manuka honey as a treatment for their ulcer after having the positives and negatives explained to them by an educated health professional.
- That health professionals re-introduce Manuka honey as a reliable wound dressing.
- Educate health professionals regarding Manuka honey and the benefits of using them.
- That further research is undertaken in order to further the knowledge available on the efficacy of Manuka honey dressings.

References:

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PECOT MODEL

The following PECOT model (Schneider & Whitehead, 2013) articulates my practice issue of Manuka honey ulcer dressings, which has led to my search question.

PECOT CATAGORY	Information Relating to Question	Explanation
Population	Older adults presenting with ulcers.	Ulcers severely impede on a persons quality of life and can significantly add to the cost of health care. I choose ulcers as they affect a large proportion of our increasing elderly population.
Exposure/ Intervention	The intervention is Manuka Honey wound dressings that will be used as a treatment for ulcers.	I will look for articles, which discuss the healing properties of Manuka honey and its effectiveness when used as a wound dressing.
Comparison/ Control	The comparison is between ulcers dressed with Manuka honey dressings and those dressed with occlusive dressings such as hydrogel and hydrocolloid, as this is a common ulcer dressing.	I will be interested to see whether Manuka Honey dressings are more effective in the promotion of ulcer healing than other dressings.
Outcome	Able to identify what the healing properties of Manuka Honey are and whether it is an effective wound dressing in ulcers.	I want to be able to identify what the healing properties of Manuka Honey are and understand how this leads to promoting healing in ulcers.
Time	Not applicable	Healing is individual to the patient.

Rational:

With the number of elderly increasing in New Zealand and the knowledge that ulcers have been found to primarily affect older adults and those who are bed bound I decided to research "What are the healing properties of Manuka Honey and is this beneficial in promoting healing in ulcers?" As my recommendations are aimed at patient and health professional education I believe that doing a poster would be more beneficial for both the patient and health professionals who would be using manuka honey wound dressings.

I would like this poster to be used as an educational tool to help further the knowledge people have surrounding what manuka honey is, the advantages of using manuka honey impregnated dressings is and whether they are effective in the treatment of ulcers.

Posters promote active learning, in that the audience must engage with the poster to read, synthesis and analyze the information presented. A poster is a way of succinctly presenting information. They are visually appealing and draw in the audience's attention as the information is presented in a way that is clear and easy to navigate (Rowe & LLic, 2009).

Rowe, N., & LLic, D. (2009). What impact do posters have on academic knowledge transfer> A pilot survey on author attitudes and experiences. *BioMed Central* , 71.

Schneider, Z., & Whitehead, D. (2013). *Nursing and Midwifery Research methods and appraisal for evidence-based practice* (4th ed.). Sydney, NSW, Australia: Mosby.