

Case Study 4: N.J.

Scenario

N.J. is a 65-year-old widow who lives alone. She has a long history of type 2 diabetes and hypertension. N.J. is not employed. She has very limited savings and relies on Social Security benefits for income. She smokes about half a pack of cigarettes a day and has been a smoker since she was in her 20s. She drinks alcohol “a couple of times a year, usually a glass of wine at a special dinner.”

N.J. has a sore on her ankle that she has noticed for the last several months. The sore does not hurt much, but she has been unable to get it to heal. The cashier at the convenience store tells her that she should use butter to help heal wounds because the butter keeps the wound moist and helps to enhance healing.

N.J. decides to follow the cashier’s advice and applies butter to her wound for a week. The wound does not seem to be getting any better; in fact, it looks worse. It now has yellowish drainage, and the skin around the wound has become red. Her foot also hurts when she walks on it. N.J. stops the butter treatment and goes to the emergency department.

Discussion Questions

1. What are the priority nursing diagnoses for N.J.?
One priority nursing diagnosis for N.J. would be impaired tissue integrity. Another nursing diagnosis would be ineffective wound management.
2. What discharge teaching will you provide her?
I would teach the patient about foot care and wound care. I would also teach/educate her about the risk of smoking because since she is a diabetic that makes her at an increased risk of foot complications.
3. How can you advocate for N.J. regarding required medical equipment, supplies, and medications and their cost on a limited budget?
Get in contact with the case manager and ask them if there is any program that we can get in contact with to help her get her medications and any other medical equipment that she will need.
4. What expectation would you anticipate for N.J. regarding follow-up care?
One expectation that I would anticipate for N.J.’s follow-up care would be going to see a podiatrist in a couple of weeks after discharge because of her sore that she has on her ankle. Another expectation I would anticipate would be going to see an endocrinologist to help her manage her T2DM and help her get her insulin or whatever she needs since she relies on Social Security benefits for income, and she might not have enough money for all the products that she needs because all the equipment for diabetes can get very expensive.