

## 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.?
  - **Inability for open wound to heal.**
  - **Patient presents Diabetic Neuropathy symptoms: loss of sensation**
2. What discharge teaching will you provide her?
  - **If prescribed antibiotics by provider, take full course of medication.**
  - **Maintain clean area on wound and maintain proper diabetic foot care such as avoiding soaking feet, wear clean socks daily, check feet daily for an injury, etc.**
  - **Maintain good control of blood glucose level since bacteria loves to feed on high sugar environments.**
  - **Promote smoking cessation.**
  - **Maintain control of hypertension**
3. How can you advocate for N.J. regarding required medical equipment, supplies, and medications and their cost on a limited budget?
  - **Consult patient's social worker to connect patient to numerous resources that assist with medical equipment, supplies, etc.**
  - **Notify provider about patient's budget on medication and see if they can prescribe a more affordable alternative medication.**
4. What expectation would you anticipate for N.J. regarding follow-up care?  
**If patient follows discharge teaching recommendations the wound will have a better chance of healing but if N.J. does not take any recommendations seriously the extremity with the wound is at risk for amputation.**