

Meredith Edwards- Module 3

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.?

The following are the priority diagnoses for NJ:

Deficient Knowledge
Risk of Ineffective Therapeutic Regimen
Risk of Disturbed Sensory perception

2. What discharge teaching will you provide her?

I would educate this patient about the need to do the following when caring for her feet:

Check for daily injury to skin
Wash her feet daily with mild soap
Make sure your feet are completely dry after showering
Never soak your feet
Avoid putting lotion between toes
Never get a pedicure
Use lanolin products
Wear clean socks daily
Don't walk barefoot
Cold feet need to be covered by socks
Make sure your shoes fit well and break in your shoes for several days prior to wearing them for an extended amount of time.
Have regular visits with a podiatrist
Avoid self-treating any foot injury and seek medical attention.

3. How can you advocate for N.J. regarding required medical equipment, supplies, and medications and their cost on a limited budget?

I would refer NJ to the following:

- a. Social work services in the hospital for aid with medical equipment, etc.
- b. Refer her to a diabetes educator
- c. Consult with the hospital dietician to educate her about healthier dietary options

I would list the following resources on her discharge paperwork:

SingleCare

Good Rx

I believe it would be beneficial to include family members and/or caregivers in the education and referral process.

4. What expectation would you anticipate for N.J. regarding follow-up care?

I would anticipate that NJ may struggle with compliance with the discharge information and follow up care. The information listed above that makes me question her level of compliance is that she is a current smoker, is diagnosed with hypertension, she is a widow which means she may not have strong support in her life to help support and encourage health choices, and lastly, she knew of her sore on her ankle for several months and did not seek medical intervention.