

Caste 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 pt has uncontrolled Type 2 DM.
 - The pt has a diabetic ulcer on one of her ankles and has some neuropathy going on – lack of sensation.
 - The pt has a possible infection due to putting “butter” on the wound. The butter is a moist, fatty medium that is ideal for bacterial growth
2. What discharge teaching will you provide her?
 - Teach the pt to check BS regularly
 - Teach the pt to eat healthy and that will help maintain a good BS.
 - Teach the important of foot care at home. Type 2 DM can affect the feet with neuropathy/circulation issues.
 - Teach the pt about smoking cessation. Can help with Type 2 DM.
 - Teach pt that “butter” is not the recommended treatment for a diabetic ulcer.
3. How can you advocate for N.J. regarding required medical equipment, supplies, and medications and their cost on a limited budget?
 - Offer additional teaching and recommendations to help maintain a healthy BS level.
 - Offer pt pamphlets or other community supportive organizations to help with the financial burden of having a chronic condition.
 - Offer to try to get a diabetic team together, nutritionist, ect.
4. What expectation would you anticipate for N.J. regarding follow-up care?
 - The pt would likely not stop smoking, so her foot wound would still take a while to heal. On top of the diabetes, her foot also must fight an infection which would have to be

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treated by antibiotics. Hopefully she would stick to her antibiotics and her antidiabetic medication if she even takes it.

- I would assume that her diet would not change much, in poverty-stricken areas it is common to have a non-healthy diet
- Hopefully she applied for financial assistance if she qualified for it and got the supplies she needs to help her check and maintain a healthy BS level.