Evaluation of the knowledge, awareness, attitudes and practices of patiens with Diabetic Foot Syndrome and active ulceration

Tejeda-Ramírez S (1), García-Madrid-Martín de Almagro M (2), López-Moral M (2), Tardáguila-García A (2), Molines-Barroso R (2), Lázaro-Martínez JL (2).
(1) Master of Diabetic Foot Student at the Complutense University of Madrid, Spain.
(2) Diabetic Foot Unit. Complutense University of Madrid, Spain.

Introduction

There is currently a striking increase in Diabetes *mellitus* and its associated complications[1] such as Diabetic Foot Syndrome (DFS) in the lower limb. To halt this progression, considered a public health problem by the World Health Organization[2], preventive tools are available which, although not attractive to clinicians and researchers[3] , have been shown to reduce complications and amputations of DFS by up to 85% [4]. Therefore, for the proper promotion, development and implementation of quality preventive programs, it is essential to know the starting point of knowledge, awareness, attitudes and practices of patients affected by DFS and its associated complications.

Aim

To describe data on the knowledge, awareness, attitudes, and practices of DFS patients with diabetic foot ulcers (DFU)

Methods

The evaluation of 50 surveys targeting DFS patients with DFU in a Specialized Diabetic Foot Unit was conducted by a single researcher between January and March 2021. The survey was composed of a total of 40 questions. Thirty-three questions were regarding the patient with ulcers knowledge, awareness, attitudes and practices and 7 questions were completed by the researcher responsible for evaluating the patient's care

Results

54% of patients did not know their HbA1c levels and 26% did not know their type of DM
30% of patients were unaware of the link between blood supply deficit and loss of sensation and the development of foot ulcers
42% of patients did not see the link between good metabolic control through exercise and adequate nutrition as a preventive element for the development of DFU
76% of the patients reported applying cream daily, only 23% had correct hydration of the feet ascertained by the investigator
78% of patients defined their footwear as suitable, although this was only corroborated by the researcher in 58% of cases
76% of patients are aware of the shoe inspection recommendation, but only 46% practice it on a daily basis
86% of patients recognise the importance of visual inspection of the foot, although only 60% do this on a daily basis
88% of patients consider it important to take the recommended rest, although 46% admit to climbing and descending stairs and 50% carry weight to carry out their daily activities
92% of patients believe that following the established recommendations helps to prevent the occurrence of DFU
94% of patients recognised the importance of seeing a podiatrist to prevent DFU
92% of patients believe that knowing about their disease can help them avoid complications
62% of patients had never received diabetic foot education
98% of patients would like to receive education on a regular basis

Conclusions

Educational actions need to be increased to improve DFS awareness and practices in patients with DFU

References

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