

# Introductory Word

Organization and holding of the 8<sup>th</sup> Symposium on chronic wounds is an indicative alert to an area of medicine which is still insufficiently explored, clinically insufficiently covered, therapeutically often questionable and preventively limited. The listed facts point to a necessity of education, specialization as well as research on the basis of good clinical practice.

In line with the above guidelines this year's Symposium is organized into several separate, but nevertheless interconnected units.

Lymphedema is a new chapter in our education, the knowledge of which is mainly limited, with only a small number of specialists dedicated professionally to this clinical issue. Lymphedema, as a progressive chronic swelling of a part of the body, is the result of inefficacy or damage of the lymph system which may have different causes. In developed countries it is usually the consequence of malignancies, and in the underdeveloped countries of the Third World the root cause is usually infection. With regard to etiopathogenesis we seem to belong to developed countries.

Patient profiles, results from clinical practice, epidemiological researches and results of investigation of targeted treatment of lower leg ulcers constitute another highly interesting unit. I believe that it will result in a high quality discussion and conclusions.

The third unit consists of invited lectures on the causes of development of chronic wounds, pathophysiology of healing, targeted suppression of pain. This part is followed by lectures on targeted treatment, substitutes and alternative forms of treatment of skin defects, carboxytherapy and targeted application of antiseptics. In this unit we will also touch upon the problems related to everyday clinical practice in primary health care and possibilities of diagnostic and therapeutic procedures.

Most relevant for everyday clinical practice will surely be the workshops which will provide opportunity for practical exercise, as well as explanation of the use of long and short elastic bandages, compression stockings, and two-ply and four-ply compressive therapy.

An interesting part of the content of the Symposium will be the presentation of the producers of medical accessories who will present new developments or improvements of their products. It is important that we have the presentation of these novelties at one place, to assess the contribution of producers dedicated to chronic wound management.

The end of the Symposium is dedicated to the presentation of the guidelines for the prevention and treatment of decubitus of the Croatian Wound Association. The aim of this session is to stimulate the participants of the Symposium, and others, to draft their own national guidelines.

It is of essence that by way of documented proposals, clinical experience and in line with objective possibilities we arrive at consensus guidelines which would be mandatory and at the same time applicable in our everyday medical practice.

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