

# Negative pressure wound therapy for patients with complicated healing? A systematic review of qualitative studies



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## Abstract

Despite the lack of evidence, negative pressure therapy is commonly used in patients with wounds with complicated healing. In our medical centre, one third of the patients with postoperatively infected abdominal wounds prematurely end this therapy due to negative experiences and prefer standard wound care. This study was designed to explore the effects of negative pressure therapy on quality of life. A search from 2000 to 2019 in eight databases was performed to identify qualitative studies of patients treated with negative pressure therapy. Two reviewers independently selected the studies, appraised the methodological quality, extracted and structured the data and performed content analysis.

Five qualitative studies with good methodological quality, incorporating 51 individual patients, were included. After content analysis four major themes emerged: (1) Reduced freedom of movement caused by an electric device; (2) Decreased self-esteem; (3) Increased social and professional dependency and (4) Gaining self-control.

Negative pressure therapy has major effects on the physical, psychological and social domains of quality of life. Knowledge of these effects may lead to a tailored decision with patients with a wound with complicated healing about negative pressure therapy or standard wound care.

## Biography

Alexandra Janssen works as a nurse specialist wound care in Elkerliek Hospital, The Netherlands. In 2016 she completed her master study (Health & Social Care) at the University of Birmingham and is currently doing her PhD on the impact of negative pressure therapy on the quality of life of patients. She is teacher at the wound care study programs at the health care academies in Nijmegen and Rotterdam. She is member of the board of the Dutch professional organization of wound care nurses and member of the Dutch Wound Platform.

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