

Venous ulcer impact on patients' quality of life: Integrative review

Úlcera venosa impacto na qualidade de vida dos pacientes: Revisão integrativa

Úlcera venosa impacto em la calidad de vida de los pacientes: Revisión integrativa

RESUMO

Objetivo: objetivo analisar as produções de conhecimento acerca dos impactos da presença da úlcera venosa na qualidade de vida dos pacientes. **Método:** revisão integrativa da literatura. Foram lidos na íntegra os 17 artigos pré-selecionados e após a leitura foram incluídos na revisão 09 artigos, publicados entre os anos de 2016 e 2022. **Resultados:** 09 estudos selecionados, sendo dois publicados em 2016, um em 2017, em 2018, um em 2019, três em 2021 e um em 2022, surgiram 02 categorias: "porque avaliar a qualidade de vida de pacientes com úlcera venosa" e "impactos da úlcera venosa na qualidade de vida dos pacientes". **Conclusão:** os impactos negativos no indivíduo em todas as suas dimensões, portanto se faz necessário que os pacientes recebam um atendimento integral e holístico, que possa ter como principais focos a humanização, a escuta ativa, o apoio psicológico e emocional desde o primeiro atendimento até o final do tratamento.

DESCRIPTORES: Pacientes; Úlcera venosa; Qualidade de vida.

ABSTRACT

Objective: the objective is to analyze the production of knowledge about the impacts of the presence of venous ulcers on the quality of life of patients. **Method:** integrative literature review. The 17 pre-selected articles were read in full and, after reading, 09 articles were included in the review, published between the years 2016 and 2022. **Results:** 09 selected studies, two published in 2016, one in 2017, one in 2018, one in 2019, three in 2021 and one in 2022, 02 categories emerged: "why evaluate the quality of life of patients with venous ulcers" and "impacts of venous ulcers on the quality of life of patients". **Conclusion:** the negative impacts on the individual in all its dimensions, therefore, it is necessary that patients receive comprehensive and holistic care, which may have humanization, active listening, psychological and emotional support from the first consultation to the end of treatment as its main focuses.

DESCRIPTORS: Patients; Venous ulcer; Quality of life.

RESUMEN

Objetivo: el objetivo es analizar la producción de conocimiento sobre los impactos de la presencia de úlceras venosas en la calidad de vida de los pacientes. **Método:** revisión integrativa de la literatura. Los 17 artículos preseleccionados fueron leídos en su totalidad y, después de la lectura, se incluyeron en la revisión 09 artículos, publicados entre los años 2016 y 2022. **Resultados:** 09 estudios seleccionados, dos publicados en 2016, uno en 2017, uno en 2018, uno en 2019, tres en 2021 y uno en 2022, surgieron 02 categorías: "por qué evaluar la calidad de vida de los pacientes con úlceras venosas" e "impactos de las úlceras venosas en la calidad de vida de los pacientes". **Conclusión:** los impactos negativos en el individuo en todas sus dimensiones, por lo tanto, es necesario que los pacientes reciban una atención integral y holística, que pueda tener como ejes principales la humanización, la escucha activa, el apoyo psicológico y emocional desde la primera consulta hasta el final del tratamiento.

DESCRIPTORES: Pacientes; úlcera venosa; Calidad de vida.

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Méllany Pinheiro Cacau

Nurse, Master's student in Health and Environment at the Federal University of Maranhão
ORCID: 0000-0002-7734-9759

Nivilly Reis Costa

Nurse, Specialist in Intensive Care by GiannaBeretta College

Sara Maria Ferreira de Sousa

Nurse, Master's student in Health and Environment at the Federal University of Maranhão
ORCID: 0000-0003-4183-3861

Amanda Silva de Oliveira

Nurse, Master's student in Nursing at the Federal University of Maranhão

Bruna Rafaela Carvalho de Andrade

Nurse, Master's student in Health and Environment at the Federal University of Maranhão

Wandrea Karoline Cunha Martins

Student of the Nursing Course at the Federal University of Maranhão

Maria de Fátima Santos Sales

Student of the Nursing Course at the Federal University of Maranhão

Ana Hélia de Lima Sardinha

Nurse PhD in Pedagogical Sciences by the Ministry of Education Central Institute in Pedagogical Sciences, Cuba and Professor of the Nursing Course at the Federal University of Maranhão.

ORCID: 0000-0002-8720-6348

INTRODUÇÃO

The increase in life expectancy also inevitably results in an increase in the prevalence of chronic diseases, including Venous Ulcer (VU).¹ Its prevalence tends to increase with age, ranging from 0.12% to 1.03%.²

Therefore, VU are among the non-communicable diseases, as they have high incidence and prevalence rates.³ The importance of the disease is determined not only by its high prevalence, but also by the financial cost of its treatment, which is very high.⁴

They are the most serious injuries resulting from Chronic Venous Insufficiency 1 and its main etiological factor is valve incompetence.⁵

The increased blood pressure inside the vessels causes tissue damage, causing inflammation and resulting in the formation of an open wound and intrinsically impairing healing.⁶ The chronicity of the lesion, the complexity of the care and the high number of recurrences characterize it as a relevant public health problem.⁷

Risk factors are age equal to or greater than 55 years, family history of chronic venous disease, history of pulmonary embolism or superficial or deep venous thrombosis, among others.⁸

The assistance provided is complex and requires the effective participation of a multidisciplinary team, transcending wound healing.⁹

Therefore, the systematic treatment of patients with UV lesions should not be restricted to anamnesis, diagnosis, debridement, dressings and compression management, but should also consider the psychological consequences and aim to improve quality of life.¹⁰

The objective of the study is to analyze the production of knowledge about the impacts of the presence of venous ulcers on the quality of life of patients. Being directed by the following guiding question: "What are the impacts of the presence of venous ulcer on the quality of life of patients?"

METHOD

An integrative review study was carried out following six steps: Identification of the theme and selection of the research question, establishment of inclusion and exclusion criteria for selection of studies, identification of pre-selected and selected studies, categorization, analysis and interpretation of results and presentation of the review.¹²

The first stage was guided by the guiding question. In the second stage, data were collected through a bibliographic survey in the MEDLINE databases (Medical Literature Analysis and Retrieval System Online); LILACS (Latin American and Caribbean Literature in Health Sciences); BDENF (Nursing Database); SCIELO (Scientific Electronic Library

Online) and PubMed.

The search strategy adopted was the use of the Boolean operator "AND" and the use of descriptors identified through the DECs and MeSH: patients, venous ulcers and quality of life.

The inclusion criteria used for the search were: original articles, in full, in Portuguese, English and Spanish, published between 2016 and 2022.

The search with the Boolean operator in association with the descriptors provided the identification of the articles that made up the initial search. Subsequently, the titles, abstracts and descriptors were read, in order to assess whether the studies were appropriate for the theme. The pre-selected studies were read in full.

Duplicate studies, integrative reviews and case studies were excluded. Therefore, at the end of the bibliographical survey process, the number of 09 articles was obtained. (Fig. 1)

In the third stage, the articles were synthesized according to the objectives of the studies and subsequently categorized.

In the fourth stage, these data were presented descriptively and demonstrated in tables. In the fifth stage, the interpretation and discussion of the results took place. In the last stage, the synthesis document and presentation of this review were created.

RESULTS

Among the 09 selected studies, we have

two published in 2016, one in 2017, one in 2018, one in 2020, three in 2021 and one in 2022.

Most of the studies that were available in the databases were in English, no studies were found in Spanish and only three in Portuguese.

Table 1 presents data on the 09 articles included in the review, 2022.

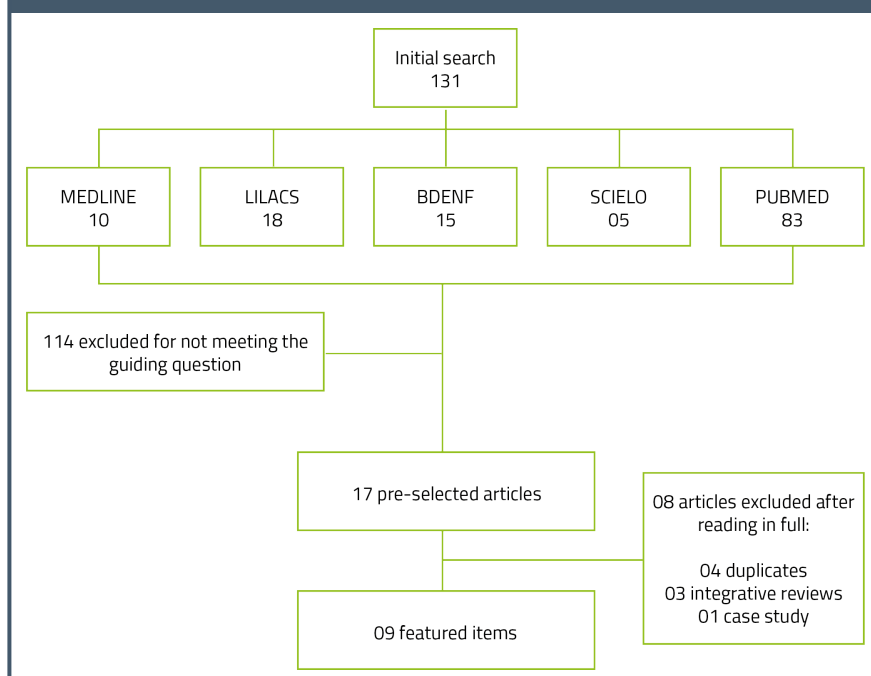
DISCUSSION

When reading the articles, it was necessary to categorize the data. Thus, 02 categories emerged that allowed the discussion of the topic, they are: "why evaluate the quality of life of patients with venous ulcer" and "impacts of venous ulcer on the quality of life of patients".

1. Why evaluate the quality of life of patients with venous ulcers

Interest in this field is on the rise and experts recommend the inclusion of measuring the quality of life of patients with

Figure 1. Flowchart of the selection process of studies included in the integrative review, 2022.



Source: Own author, 2022

Table 1. Summary of selected studies, 2022.

Year / Language	Title	Type of study	Objective of study	Result
2016 / Portuguese	Impact of venous ulcers on the quality of life of individuals assisted in primary care. (Impacto de úlceras venosas na qualidade de vida de indivíduos atendidos na atenção primária.)	Cross-sectional	To analyze the impact of venous ulcers (VU) on the quality of life of people assisted in primary health care.	The emotional state was the most affected. The aesthetic dimension was more compromised in people who had the lesion for more than a year.
2016 / English	Correlation between health-related quality of life and venous leg ulcer's severity and characteristics: a cross-sectional study	Multicentric	Determine health-related quality of life.	The most affected aspect was the emotional aspect and the least impacted were domestic activities.
2017 / English	Distinct wound healing and quality of life outcomes in subgroups of patients with venous leg ulcers with different symptom cluster experiences.	Secondary analysis	Identify subgroups of patients with venous ulcers in their experience with the symptom cluster;	The most frequent symptoms in patients with venous ulcers were: sleep disturbances, pain, leg edema, fatigue, intense exudate and depressive symptoms.
2018 / English	Health-related quality of life in patients with venous leg ulcer treated in primary care in Brazil and Portugal.	Cross-sectional	To describe the quality of life of people with venous ulcers assisted in primary care in Natal (Brazil) and Évora (Portugal).	Physical appearance, pain, social functioning, dimensions of health and total quality of life score were significantly higher in Portugal.

2020 / English	Factors associated with the quality of life of patients with venous leg ulcers in primary care: cross-sectional.	Cross-sectional	Determine the perceived quality of life in individuals and examine the factors that may be associated with the quality of life of these patients.	The patients had a deteriorated quality of life. The most affected dimension was emotional state, the second most affected is aesthetics.
2021 / Portuguese	Quality of life and self-esteem of patients with venous ulcers (Qualidade de vida e autoestima de pacientes com úlcera venosa)	Cross-sectional	To evaluate the quality of life and self-esteem of patients with venous ulcers.	VU has negative impacts on both men and women, but men have better scores related to improved quality of life.
2021 / English	Potential Predictors Of Quality Of Life in patients with venous leg ulcers: a cross-sectional study in Taiwan	Correlational	To explore venous clinical severity variables, pain, fatigue, depression and sleep quality, and their relationships with quality of life in patients with venous ulcers.	The more comorbidities, the greater the venous clinic, the greater severity, the greater pain experienced, the worse the quality of life.
2021 / English	Association Wound genesis on varying aspects of health-related quality of life in patients with different types of chronic wounds: results of a cross-sectional multicenter study.	Retrospective, multicentric	To investigate physical, psychological and daily life differences and quality of life in patients with chronic wounds of different origins.	Women had a significantly greater impairment of quality of life in the physical aspect than men.
2022 / Portuguese	Social representations of patients with vasculogenic ulcers about quality of life: analysis of the social context (Representações sociais de pacientes com úlceras vasculogênicas sobre qualidade de vida: análise do contexto social)	Qualitative	To describe the social representations of patients with vasculogenic ulcers about quality of life	There was a reconfiguration of the patients' lives based on the presence of the ulcer in the orientation of their social representations about quality of life.

Source: Own author, 2022

VU to understand their needs, providing better planning of their care.¹³

A better understanding of variations in patient symptom experiences can be used to identify a higher risk of worse outcomes and allow professionals to provide personalized solutions and cost-effective interventions to improve cure rates and QoL outcomes,

in addition to constructing and putting into practice an assistance plan to promote and prevent the possible aggravation of injuries.¹⁻⁶

The importance of studying QoL in patients with VU lies in the fact that the results obtained in the assessments can help guide clinical decision-making and define health policies for the treatment of patients.⁴

As many patients experience long-las-

ting recurrent ulcers, the management of this disease is critical.⁶

Identifying which factors affect the QoL and functional capacity of patients makes it possible to carry out a care plan for the promotion and prevention of possible aggravations. Carrying out multidisciplinary care allows greater adherence to treatment and, consequently, faster healing and, consequently, a reduction in financial costs.¹

Therefore, studies indicate that it is necessary to value the technical-instrumental needs of patients with regard to the biological dimension of clinical therapy, but also the importance of exchange and listening in care must be understood.⁵

Evaluating and addressing the factors that reduce the QoL of patients is as important as the technical aspects of ulcer

care, emotional and psychological support is extremely necessary for these patients.⁴

2. Impacts of venous ulcer on patients' quality of life:

With regard to the impacts on quality of life, the impairment of the emotional state and aesthetics deserve to be highlighted. The worsening in the value of QoL is associated in some studies with the current time of the injury, also generating concern with appearance, dissatisfaction with the body generates self-devaluation and precariousness of self-image with several limitations, which generates great discomfort¹¹; people with more than one year of injury tend to have a worse emotional state, even to the detriment of other important factors such as daily activities and influence in the social environment.⁴

Such findings demonstrate the need to offer not only physical care for the treatment or healing of the wound, but also to explore the aspects that are most affected in patients in order to provide emotional support.¹³

In a secondary analysis study on the group of most common symptoms in patients with VU, the presence of the following symptoms was observed: sleep disturbances, pain, edema in the lower limbs and depressive symptoms.⁶

Pain in association with restrictions and social isolation results in an extremely heavy psychosocial burden, which is one of the most stressful factors for them.⁹⁻¹⁰ It is notorious in studies that the presence of pain was associated with a worsening of QoL.

Patients state that the pain reminds them of the presence of the wound and makes them feel a loss of control over it, the pain prevents them from sleeping peacefully, which results in fatigue and worse performance during the day.¹³

Fatigue is a complex phenomenon whereby the patient experiences unpleasant internal and subjective feelings, including general tiredness, discomfort, lack of vitality, negative perceptions of health and feelings of exhaustion. This phenomenon occurs at the physical, psychological and emotional levels, the more tired the patient, the worse their QoL in relation to daily activities.²

Among the damages are: depression, low self-esteem, self-loathing, social isolation, among others. With regard to social interaction, it is observed that exclusion and loss of privacy were major changes in patients' lives.¹¹

These patients have a higher incidence of depressive symptoms when compared to healthy people, this fact may occur due to the presence of pain, the concern that others might smell wound exudate and the stress associated with a chronic wound and its slow healing process.² Patients who experience negative feelings such as shame, loneliness and frustration tend to have

higher levels of depression and anxiety.⁵

CONCLUSION

This research enabled the analysis of productions on the impact of venous ulcers on patients' quality of life, between the years 2016 and 2022. The results obtained clearly show the negative impacts on the individual, with regard to habits, aesthetics and emotional and professional aspects of patients.

Therefore, it is necessary for these patients to receive comprehensive and holistic care, which focuses on humanization, active listening, psychological and emotional support.

Thus, it is recommended to carry out further studies aimed at the strategies that can be used to reduce these impacts on the quality of life of patients; also evaluate the benefits of psychological support throughout the process.

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