



Wound Sleuth

By Rob Miller, MD, FRCP, Dermatologist
and Cathy Burrows, RN, BScN, MScCH (Wound Prevention and
Care), Clinical Consultant

History

The patient is an 82-year-old male who presents with a wound over the left fifth metatarsal head. He sustained this wound from a traumatic injury 62 years prior while a young man in the Second World War. He is a non-smoker, is non-diabetic, lives alone and remains very active. He has had numerous infections over the years that were treated with antibiotics.

Q What is the diagnosis?

A Due to the nature of his injury, the patient was suspected as having a foreign body in the wound.

Q How would you confirm the diagnosis?

A This patient had numerous X-rays of his foot over the past 62 years, none of which indicated the presence of a foreign body. However, a careful history and physical examination would lead one to deduce that the chronic infections were caused by possible foreign body.

Q What would the treatment be?

A The patient was taken to the day surgery department to have the wound surgically debrided. Post-op, the dressing selected was

cadexomer-impregnated ½-inch gauze packing three times a week. A secondary absorbent dressing was used to cover. He was followed at home by community nurses and reassessed in the outpatient clinic weekly for regular further debridement to the wound edges. The patient was also assessed by a podiatrist for appropriate off-loading footwear. He achieved closure by week eight. 🩹

Rob Miller is a dermatologist and Cathy Burrows is an independent wound care consultant, both in Halifax.

