

Malignant Wounds

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What is a malignant wound?

- Cancer breaks through the skin
- Damages blood vessels and deprives oxygen
- Necrosis +/- infection

- Rare



Presentation

- Location and appearance can vary considerably
 - Deep necrotic ulceration
 - Extensive cutaneous infiltration
 - Raised nodules
 - ‘cauliflower like’
 - Fistulae



Symptoms

- Discharge
- An unpleasant smell
- Pain
- Bleeding
- Itching



Treatment

- Reduce the tumour load
 - Radiotherapy
 - Chemotherapy
 - Hormonal therapy
 - Surgery



Radiotherapy

- High energy rays destroy cancer cells
- Shrinkage
- Area may become dry and red



Chemotherapy & Hormonal therapy

- Destroy cancer cells
- Slow the growth
- Relieve symptoms

Surgery



Controlling Symptoms

- Leakage
 - Most common
 - Dressings
- Unpleasant smell
 - Distressing
- Pain
 - Nerve damage
 - Analgesia



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- Bleeding
 - Common
 - Dressing
 - Adrenaline
 - Itching



Emotions

- Anxiety, depression
- Isolated
- Body image

- Support
- Dress wound appropriately
- Complementary therapies



Recap

- Fundamental principles that underlie wound healing are:
 - Identification and if possible control of underlying causes
 - Support of patient centered concerns
 - Optimization of local wound care