

Should our mantra be 'keep the skin healthy'



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Having just come back from a week of holiday, where the glorious sunshine restored my spirits, I was a little dismayed to be reminded of the impact of the sun on photoaging of the skin, (to be clear I wore factor 50 all week, but did still come back a lovely golden brown colour having spent most of my time in the water with three small boys).

This was, however, a really interesting read, I was grabbed by the click bait headline 'The curious ways your skin shapes your health' and the bold text call out 'Weathered or unhealthy skin is emerging as a major risk factor for almost every single age-related disease, from Parkinson's to type 2 diabetes'

What does unhealthy skin have to do with all these other things? The answer is of course inflammation. The article outlines how particularly dry and itchy skin can set up massive inflammatory responses and how simple interventions such as applying moisturiser can easily reverse this. In the studies they cite, they implied that the healthy skin also correlated with overall physical and mental health — bold claims and until I read the actual research I will treat with caution. However what did strike me was the simple message they were putting forward, it was basically look after your skin, keep your skin well hydrated. Isn't this a hugely important message for all of our patients? Irrespective of what wound they have or are at risk of isn't keeping the skin clean, dry and well hydrated our fundamental message. I have previously discussed the importance of having a single message, avoiding the dilution of the key things — keep the skin healthy should become our mantra, follow the aSKINg process whatever wound aetiology you are interested in!

As the summer fades into the distance we move into one of the busiest times of the year, certainly from an event perspective, there is lot happening in the next few months, we have EPUAP in Leeds in the middle of September, Leg Club in Worcester in late September, BLS in October and then of course the main event of *Wounds UK* conference in Harrogate at the beginning of November closely followed by Stop the Pressure Day on the 16 November.

EPUAP has a really strong programme and it's great to see so many UK clinicians and researchers represented not just in the invited speakers but also across the free papers and posters. The conference will be opened by Dame Ruth May who as you know has been passionate about and a great advocate for pressure ulcer prevention for many years, starting the Stop the Pressure Programme when she was first Chief Nurse in the East of England in 2011. You can see the final programme here: https://epuap2023.org/wp-content/uploads/sites/15/2023/09/EPUAP_2023_Final_programme_web.pdf. There will also be a specific section in memory of an amazing friend and colleague who we very sadly lost last year — Professor Dan Bader and the Society of Tissue Viability are funding a new award in his name.

This first Leg Club conference since 2019 will take place at the end of September at Worcester County Cricket Club. As always there will be a day of really practical workshops followed by a day of speakers from across the world. If you haven't already read the Leg Club manifesto you might want to do so and sign their pledge to reduce the post code lottery in leg ulcer care here: <https://www.legclub.org/manifesto>

And then of course it is *Wounds UK 2023* — in Harrogate. There are some amazing sessions this year — the one NOT to miss is the anatomy session on Tuesday — this will be anatomy as you have never seen it before! Of course there are lots of other brilliant sessions, a challenging and motivating opening from Leanne Atkin, the usual series of Made Easy sessions, joint sessions with podiatry colleagues, plenaries covering some very thought provoking topics: the role of drugs in wound healing, blood tests and chronic wounds and the usual short updates on common but maybe unusual wounds which will cover Ring worm, Rosacea, Peri oral dermatitis, Shingles (very topical at the minute) Scabies and Urticaria this year.

There will also of course be the gala dinner — so make sure you bring your dancing shoes.

Looking forward to seeing you all at one or more of these.



Web links

The curious ways your skin shapes your health <https://www.bbc.com/future/article/20230823-the-curious-ways-your-skin-shapes-your-health>
EPUAP 2023 <https://epuap2023.org/>
The Lindsay Leg Club annual conference 2023 <https://www.legclub.org/events>
BLS conference 2023 <https://www.theblsconference.com/>
Wounds UK annual conference <https://wounds-uk.com/event/wounds-uk-annual-conference/>
The Dan Bader Memorial Award <https://societyoftissueviability.org/the-dan-bader-memorial-award/>