

## Advances in stem cell therapy can improve outcomes for patients with chronic diabetic foot ulcers

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According to data presented at the 73<sup>rd</sup> Annual Scientific Conference of the American College of Foot and Ankle Surgeons (ACFAS), advances in stem cell therapy can significantly improve outcomes for patients with chronic diabetic foot ulcers. Use of stem cells to treat foot problems like diabetic ulcers may speed up the healing process, preventing infection and hospitalization during recovery.

Stem cells are undifferentiated biological cells found in blood and bone marrow among many other tissues. Sometimes referred to as the "Swiss army knife of healing," stem cells have the ability to develop into many different cell types in the body, including bone, cartilage and fat. When applied directly to a wound, such as a foot ulcer, stem cells can grow over the affected area and help to provide the wound with closure so healing can take place.

"With recent developments in stem cell research, patients experience a quicker and easier recovery," said Javier LaFontaine, DPM, FACFAS, a Dallas foot and ankle surgeon, Fellow Member of ACFAS and associate professor at the University of Texas Southwestern Medical Center. "We are optimistic that this complementary therapy will reduce unnecessary pain, disability and even amputation, which have become an unfortunate reality for many diabetics."

Diabetic patients frequently develop chronic foot conditions, like ulcers, as a result of peripheral neuropathy, which causes a lack of sensation of the lower extremities. Often misdiagnosed, these conditions can lead to more serious complications, including amputations; but when caught early are highly treatable.

Recent scientific studies of stem cell research in diabetic-related foot wounds have shown favorable results when looking at wound closure time, the number of treatment applications, probability of wound closure, the number of adverse events and the number of wound-related infections.

Meeting this week in Phoenix, the American College of Foot and Ankle Surgeons Annual Scientific Conference brings together more than 1,400 of the nation's leading foot and ankle surgeons to explore cutting edge clinical and practice management topics in foot and ankle care. The conference program features 135 expert presenters delivering a variety of evidence-based presentations to highlight practice-changing techniques and clinical discoveries in podiatric surgical care.

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Source:

American College of Foot and Ankle Surgeons

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