

The Impact Of A Cinnamon Odour Control Dressing* In Managing Malodour In A Malignant Fungating Breast Wound.

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Introduction

Although relatively rare, with an estimated prevalence rate of 3.6%, malignant fungating wounds (MFW) can be devastating for patients and their family and challenging for clinicians. (Ousey et al. 2024)

Unpleasant odour from malignant fungating wounds can lead to embarrassment, anxiety, a lack of confidence and reduced quality of life for patients. (Maida et al. 2009)

This case study aims to assess the impact of a cinnamon-based dressing* on a patient with a malodorous MFW.

Method

A 40-year-old woman with metastatic breast cancer, presented with a malodorous MFW, persisting for 8 months. Initial wound conditions were 20% necrotic, 10% granulating and 70% soft slough. Exudate level was high.

Previous treatments included palliative radiotherapy (20 Gy in 5 fractions), and two cycles of chemotherapy. A carbon dressing had been used in an attempt to control wound odour, However the patient still rated the odour as ‘strong’ with the dressing in situ.

To address her primary concern, malodour, 0.75% topical metronidazole gel was applied in combination with a cinnamon-based dressing for a period of 14 days.

Odour level was assessed at baseline (day 0), day 7 and day 14 using a wound odour scoring system ("none," "slight," "moderate," "strong"). Qualitative feedback was collected on the psychological impact of odour reduction on the patient and her family.

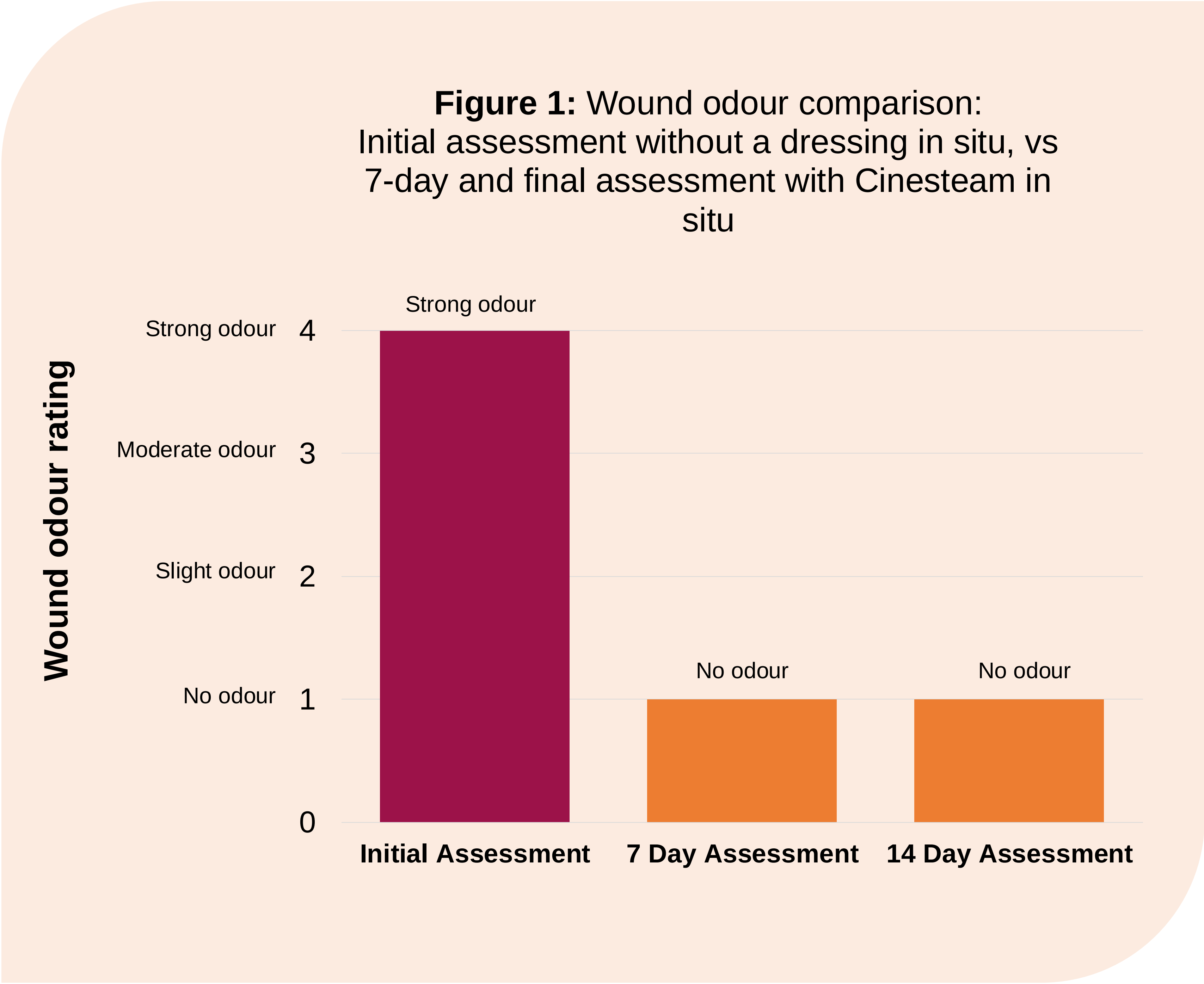
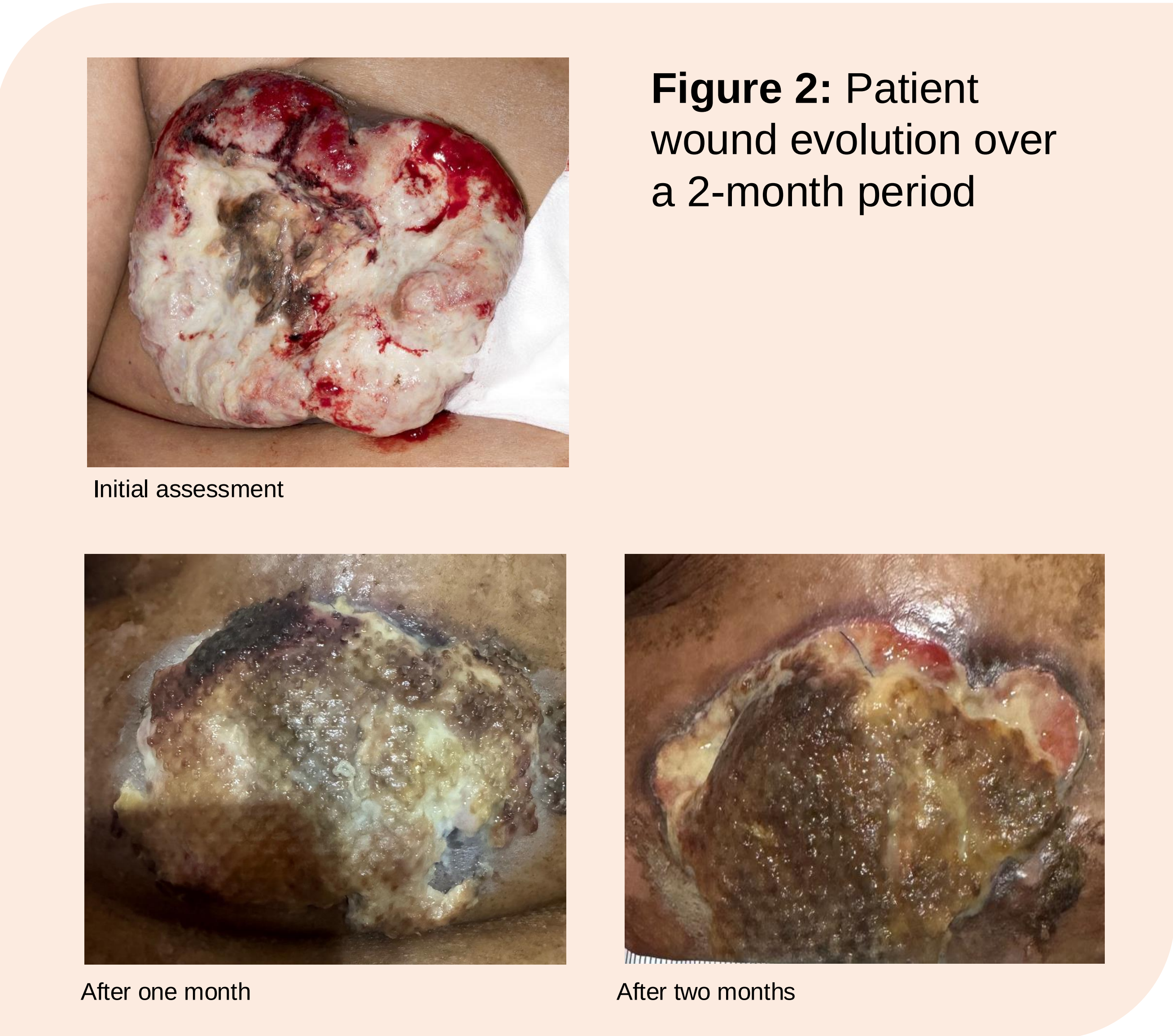
Results

Within 7 days, the patient rated the wound odour as ‘none’ with the cinnamon-dressing in situ and this score was maintained at day 14 (Figure 1).

At final 14-day assessment, wound conditions were 10% granulating, 20% soft slough and 70% thick slough. Exudate levels remained high. The patient requested continued use of the cinnamon dressing beyond the 14-day evaluation period.

Photos of the wound were taken at initial assessment and after one and two months. (Figure 2).

In controlling the odour, the patient found relief, felt confident enough to socialise which positively impacted her overall well-being. Importantly, her children and family were able to visit without distress. The patients husband commented that the dressing was a “game-changer” for his wife, giving her the confidence to be social.



Conclusion

This case study highlights the impact of a cinnamon-based dressing in effectively managing malodour in a malignant fungating wound.

The rapid and sustained odour reduction not only improved the patient’s physical comfort but also restored her confidence and social engagement, demonstrating a meaningful enhancement in her quality of life during this challenging time.

Additionally, the positive effect extended to her family, alleviating emotional distress and fostering a more supportive environment.

These findings suggest that cinnamon-based dressings may offer a valuable and patient-centred approach for managing malodour in MFWs.