

***ABSTRACT: Presented at The Symposium on Advanced Wound Care (SAWC), San Antonio, TX May 2015.***

# Limb Ischemia is an Economic Contraindication to NPWT: 3<sup>rd</sup> party payers will not reimburse for NPWT in ischemic limbs, a policy that can be worked around

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## Background

Negative pressure wound therapy (NPWT) introduced in 1995, like cardio-pulmonary bypass machines enabled the first aortic valve replacement in 1967, has improved the lives of millions of patients with chronic wounds.<sup>1</sup> None would argue that 3<sup>rd</sup> party providers must have written policies to regulate who receives what type of cardiac valve replacement. Patients with ischemic limbs who need NPWT face rigid regulatory hurdles from 3<sup>rd</sup> party payers creating a challenge for wound care providers.<sup>2,3</sup>

## Methods

Two patients with profound ischemia, no Doppler signals were present in ipsilateral foot, with chronic limb threatening ischemic wounds were treated with NPWT. We worked around the policy of Nebraska Medicare and Iowa Medicaid to not pay for NPWT in ischemic limbs, by asking manufactures to donate NPWT devices for compassionate care. Photographs document complete healing of all wound, angiogram results, and treatment details.

## Results

NPWT healed all limb threatening wounds in spite ankle brachial indices (ABI) of zero.

## Conclusion

Third party payer policies restrict payment for NPWT in ischemic limbs in patients with non-correctable end stage arterial ischemia. For now, to salvage ischemic limbs, wound care providers must work around flawed payer policy.

## References

1. In Memoriam John W. Kirklin 1917–2004, Denton A. Cooley, MD, Texas Heart International Journal 2004, 31(@) 113.
2. Evidence-based recommendations for the use of negative pressure wound therapy in chronic wounds: steps towards an international consensus. [Vig S<sup>1</sup>](#), [Dowsett C](#), [Berg L](#), [J Tissue Viability](#). 2011 Dec;20 Suppl 1:S1-18. [J Tissue Viability](#). 2011 Dec; 20 Suppl 1:S1-18.
3. [Kasai Y<sup>1</sup>](#), [Nemoto H](#), [Kimura N](#), [Ito Y](#), [Sumiya N](#). , Application of low-pressure negative pressure wound therapy to ischaemic wounds. [J Plast Reconstr Aesthet Surg](#). 2012 Mar;65(3):395-8.

\*ExtriCare NPWT System, Devon Medical Inc., King of Prussia, PA

\*\*Endoform Dermal Template, Hollister Wound Care Inc., Libertyville, IL

\*\*\* EdemaWear®, EdemaWear®LITE™, Compression Dynamics LLC, Omaha, NE

\*\*\*\*Kalypto NPWT System, Kalypto Medical Inc., acquired by Smith Nephew May 2012