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**Conducted Healing to Treat Large Skin Wounds**

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**Abstract**

*Background:* Improvement of the healing process to provide better aesthetical and functional results continues to be a surgical challenge. This study compared the treatment of skin wounds by means of conducted healing (an original method of treatment by secondary healing) and by the use of autogenous skin grafts.

*Method:* Two skin segments, one on each side of the dorsum, were removed from 17 rabbits. The side that served as a graft donor site was left open as to undergo conducted healing (A) and was submitted only to debridement and local care with dressings. The skin removed from the side mentioned above was implanted as a graft (B) to cover the wound on the other side. Thus, each animal received the two types of treatment on its dorsum (A and B). The rabbits were divided into two groups according to the size of the wounds: Group 1 - A and B (4 $cm^2$) and Group 2 - A and B (25 $cm^2$). The healing time was 19 days for Group 1 and 35 days for Group 2. The final macro- and microscopic aspects of the healing process were analysed comparatively among all subgroups. The presence of inflammatory cells, epidermal cysts and of giant cells was evaluated.

*Results:* No macro- or microscopic differences were observed while comparing the wounds that underwent conducted healing and those in which grafting was employed, although the wounds submitted to conducted healing healed more rapidly.

*Conclusions:* Conducted wound healing was effective for the treatment of skin wounds.

**Key words:** wound healing, skin graft, skin transplant, surgical debridement, dressings

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