

Maggot Therapy Takes Us Back to the Future of Wound Care: New and Improved Maggot Therapy for the 21st Century

Ronald A. Sherman, M.D., M.Sc., D.T.M.H.

Abstract

In the 21st century, eighty years after William Baer presented his groundbreaking work treating bone and soft tissue infections with live maggots, thousands of therapists around the globe have rediscovered the benefits of maggot therapy. The renaissance in maggot therapy is due in large part to recent technological advancements that have solved or minimized many of the treatment's earlier drawbacks: the need for reliable access to this perishable medical device, simplified application, and low-cost production. Modern dressing materials have simplified the procedure and minimized the risk of escaping maggots. The establishment of dozens of laboratories throughout the world, along with access to overnight courier services in many regions, has made medicinal maggots readily available to millions of people in need. Studies show that fears of patient nonacceptance are unfounded. The medical literature is rapidly growing with scientific evidence demonstrating the efficacy and safety of maggot therapy for a variety of problematic wounds. This article examines how these and other technologies are optimizing the study and application of maggot therapy for wound care.

J Diabetes Sci Technol 2009;3(2):336-344

Author Affiliations: BioTherapeutics, Education and Research Foundation, Irvine, California; Special Diseases Branch, Orange County Health Care Agency, Santa Ana, California; and Monarch Labs, LLC, Irvine, California

Abbreviations: (BTER) BioTherapeutics, Education and Research Foundation, (FDA) Food and Drug Administration, (MDT) maggot debridement therapy

Keywords: diabetes, larva, maggot, therapy, ulcer, wound

Corresponding Author: Ronald A. Sherman, M.D., M.Sc., D.T.M.H., Director, BioTherapeutics, Education and Research Foundation, 36 Urey Court, Irvine, CA 92617; e-mail address RSherman@BTERFoundation.org