Use of Ionic Silver Dressing in the Treatment of a Wound in an Ocelot (Leopardus pardalis)

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Objective: To evaluate the effectiveness of ionic silver dressing in treating a wound in an ocelot, considering its antimicrobial activity, ability to remain on the lesion for up to 7 days, and potential to reduce stress from handling.

Methods: Ocelot (10.560 kg) presenting with an extensive lacerated wound on the left thoracic limb, with significant loss of cutaneous and subcutaneous tissue, exposing bone and tendon structures. Necrotic tissue (areas of both dry and moist necrosis) and purulent exudate were present, suggesting local infection. The surrounding tissues were edematous and hyperemic, consistent with an intense acute inflammatory process. All dressing changes were performed under sedation. Initial medical management included a single dose of cephalothin (30 mg/kg, single dose), meloxicam (0.05 mg/kg, SC), gabapentin (7.5 mg/kg, PO, SID, continuous use), and dipyrone (25 mg/kg, PO, SID, for 7 days). The dressing protocol included cleaning with polyhexanide-based antiseptic (PHMB 0.2%), saline solution, and aqueous polyhexanide solution (15 minutes), application of silver sulfadiazine + cerium nitrate ointment, and coverage with gauze, bandage, and elastic wrap. Antimicrobial therapy was started with cefadroxil (22 mg/kg, PO, SID, for 30 days). The same protocol was repeated 72 hours later (Day 3). Twenty-four hours after the second dressing (Day 4), a new dressing was applied, with an ionic silver dressing after cleaning with polyhexanide-based antiseptic, saline solution, and aqueous polyhexanide solution. Dressing changes were performed approximately every 5 days, from 10/17/24 to 12/07/24. By Day 54, the wound showed a central area of healthy granulation tissue, indicating favorable healing progression. The wound edges were regular, with no signs of active infection, showing characteristics compatible with the proliferative phase of healing; therefore, it was decided to keep the animal without dressings from that date. Wound management then consisted of applying a healing spray based on ketanserin tartrate and asiaticoside (TID), for 15 days. From Day 70, an aqueous polyhexanide spray (TID) was used.

Results: The use of the ionic silver dressing promoted favorable clinical progression in treating the wound in the ocelot, with a reduction of the infectious process, formation of healthy granulation tissue, and efficient wound healing. Dressing changes every five days reduced sedation, handling, and stress. On Day 54, the lesion was already in the proliferative phase; on Day 97, it was completely closed.

Figure 1. Evolution of wound management in an ocelot (*Leopardus pardalis*). **A.** Lesion in 10/17/24. **B.** Lesion in 10/23/24. **C.** Lesion in 10/29/24. **D.** Lesion in 11/06/24. **E.** Lesion in 11/13/24. **F.** Lesion in 11/19/24. **G.** 12/05/24. **H.** Lesion in 01/09/25. **I.** Lesion in 01/16/25.

Conclusion: Ionic silver dressings proved to be an effective alternative for treating extensive wounds in wild felids, promoting tissue regeneration, infection control, and longer intervals between dressing changes, thereby improving animal welfare and recovery.

I have no conflict of interest.

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