The effect of Manuka honey on post surgical nail avulsion wound healing.

Manuka honey, a New Zealand honey, has been found to exhibit high levels of anti-biotic components that can be used effectively in the treatment of wounds (Molan, 2001). In addition to the anti-microbial components, this honey aids wound healing through allowing for moist wound healing to occur and also aids autolytic debridement of wounds, neutralising odour and stimulation tissue regeneration. There has been a renaissance in the use of honey in wound healing due to the increasing resistance of bacteria to antibiotics (Bilal & Gedebou, 2000).

Onychocryptosis is a common disorder that often requires surgical removal of the pathological nail. Nail avulsion with phenol ablation of the nail matrix is the most commonly used surgical method to treat onychocryptosis due to the minimal regrowth rates, and simplicity of the procedure. Concern lies with the extended healing time associated with the use of phenol acid due to the creation of a chemical burn (White, 2005).

The purpose of this study was to investigate the effect of Manuka honey on the wound healing time in nail avulsion wounds, with phenol ablation of the matrix. This research was conducted at the Charles Sturt University Allied Health Centre, and involves the use of thirteen subjects. Subjects were randomly assigned to a Manuka honey dressing group, or a plain gauze dressing group and were required to return for weekly re-dressing appointments until such time as the wound had healed.

Results showed no statistically significant difference between the two groups, $p > 0.05$ for all variables tested. However, the descriptive statistics indicate a clinically significant difference between the two groups. This is most likely due to the small sample size used in the study.