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## Professional care in painful neuropathy: A pivotal role of the nurse practitioner

Peripheral sensory neuropathy, like painful small fiber neuropathy (SFN), has typical sensory symptoms, such as burning sensation, pins and needles, allodynia and hyperalgesia. SFN can extremely interfere in daily functioning, mobility and sleep, and therefore nurse practitioners (NPs) are crucial for patient education, awareness and help in coping with these conditions. Skin biopsy is an important diagnostic tool for diagnosing SFN. SFN is associated with conditions like diabetes mellitus and autoimmune diseases, but in 53% of the patients, the etiology remains unknown. Treating the underlying condition is the first-line treatment, but most patients will also need symptomatic treatment based on the biopsychosocial model. SFN can be managed by several health care professionals, including NPs, neurologists, and pain specialists. This presentation shows the central role of NPs in the Netherlands, provides evidence-based information on the diagnostics of SFN and offers guidance for interdisciplinary treatment.

**Keywords:** diagnostic tests, interdisciplinary treatment, neuropathic pain treatment, nurse practitioners, small fiber neuropathy

### Biography

Margot Geerts received her bachelor's degree in Nursing in 1999. Until 2005 she worked as a nurse at the department of Cardiothoracic Surgery at the Maastricht UMC+, the Netherlands. In 2007 she obtained her master's degree in Advanced Nursing Practice (M-ANP) at Zuyd University of Applied Sciences. Margot's research initially focused on the treatment and quality of care for painful diabetic neuropathy, and from 2016 painful small fiber neuropathy (SFN). She is also a lecturer at the M-ANP at Zuyd University of Applied Sciences and a postdoc researcher at Maastricht University, Faculty of Health, Medicine and Life Sciences (FHML).